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R E P O R T

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ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

INTO WORKING CONDITIONS

IN THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT

228C

Commissioner

The Honourable André Montpetit.

October 1966

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TO HIS EXCELLENCY  
THE GOVERNOR GENERAL IN COUNCIL,

May It Please Your Excellency,

The undersigned begs to submit to Your Excellency the Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Working Conditions in the Post Office Department.

Respectfully submitted,

*André Monette*

Commissioner

This fourteenth day of September,  
One thousand nine hundred and sixty-six



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ORDER IN COUNCIL

P.C. 1965-1590

Certified to be a true copy of a Minute of a Meeting of the Committee of the Privy Council, approved by His Excellency the Governor General on the 1st September 1965.

The Committee of the Privy Council, on the recommendation of the Postmaster General, advise that Mr. Justice Andre Montpetit, Montreal, Quebec, be appointed a Commissioner under Part I of the Inquiries Act to inquire into the Post Office Department concerning grievances relating to work rules, codes of discipline and other conditions of employment applying to non-supervisory operating employees, exclusive of salaries; in doing so, to consult with officers of the Department and of organizations representing employees; and, keeping in mind both the welfare of employees and the efficient operation of the postal service, to report thereon and to recommend such changes in existing practices as may be in the public interest.

The Committee further advise:

1. that the Commissioner be authorized to exercise all the powers conferred upon him by section 11 of the Inquiries Act;
2. that the Commissioner adopt such procedures and methods as he may from time to time deem expedient for the proper conduct of the inquiry and sit at such times and at such places as he may decide from time to time;
3. that the Commissioner be authorized to engage the services of such counsel, staff and technical advisers as he may require at rates of remuneration and reimbursement approved by the Treasury Board; and
4. that the Commissioner report to the Governor in Council with all reasonable despatch, and file with the Dominion Archivist the papers and records of the Commission as soon as reasonably may be after the conclusion of the inquiry.

R. G. Robertson,  
Clerk of the Privy Council.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction .....	i
Foreword .....	xi
PART I - THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT AND ITS EMPLOYEES .....	1
Explanatory Note .....	3
Chapter 1. - The Post Office Department - Field Operating Services ...	4
Chapter 2. - Non-supervisory Operating Employees .....	9
1. Postal Workers .....	10
Postal Clerks .....	10
Mail Despatchers .....	11
Mail Handlers .....	11
Postal Chauffeurs .....	11
2. Letter Carriers .....	11
3. Supervisory Letter Carriers .....	12
4. Railway Mail Clerks .....	12
Chapter 3. - The Staff Organizations .....	13
PART II - GENERAL IMPRESSIONS .....	15
Chapter 4. - General Impressions .....	17
PART III - COMMON PROBLEMS OF A GENERAL NATURE .....	27
Chapter 5. - Collective Bargaining .....	29
Chapter 6. - Consultation .....	35
Chapter 7. - Delegation of Authority .....	41

	Page
Chapter 8. - Manpower .....	44
1. Establishments and controls .....	44
2. Staffing and turnover .....	48
3. Part-time employees .....	50
4. Casual employees .....	55
5. Christmas help .....	59
6. Special manning problems .....	61
Chapter 9. - Classification of Positions .....	63
Chapter 10. - The Work Week .....	68
1. Hours of work and shift schedules .....	68
2. Week-end work .....	74
3. Overtime in general .....	78
4. Meal hours .....	80
5. Coffee breaks .....	84
6. Wash-up time .....	85
Chapter 11. - Pay and Allowances .....	86
1. Pay cheques .....	86
2. Acting pay .....	88
3. Night differential .....	90
4. Boot allowance .....	92
5. Clothing .....	94
Chapter 12. - Seniority .....	99
Chapter 13. - Leave .....	105
1. Vacation leave .....	105
2. Sick leave .....	110
3. Special leave with pay .....	112
4. Leave without pay .....	114

	Page
Chapter 14. - Proficiency Examinations .....	115
Chapter 15. - Competitions and Promotions .....	118
Chapter 16. - Discipline .....	129
Chapter 17. - Grievance Procedure .....	134
Chapter 18. - Appeals to the Civil Service Commission .....	138
Chapter 19. - Investigations .....	142
Chapter 20. - Observation Galleries .....	144
Chapter 21. - Political Activities .....	146
Chapter 22. - Training and Development .....	149
Chapter 23. - Directives and Instructions .....	156
Chapter 24. - Environmental and Physical Working Conditions .....	162
1. General .....	162
Standards of environmental and physical working conditions .	163
The implementation of standards .....	165
The division of authority and responsibilities .....	166
2. Accidents .....	167
3. Safety programs .....	170
4. First aid and medical facilities .....	173
First aid .....	173
Medical facilities .....	174
5. Equipment and supplies .....	176
6. Dust .....	181
7. Construction of post offices, air-conditioning and lighting ...	183
Construction of post offices .....	183
Air-conditioning .....	184
Lighting .....	185

	Page
8. Transportation .....	185
9. Parking .....	189
10. Smoking .....	191
Chapter 25. - Preferred Assignment for Cause .....	193
Chapter 26. - Some Major Fringe Benefits .....	195
1. Superannuation and death benefit plans .....	196
2. Accumulated sick leave credits .....	204
3. Longevity pay .....	206
4. Surgical-medical insurance plans .....	209
PART IV - PROBLEMS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO POSTAL CLERKS .....	211
Chapter 27. - Wicket Clerks .....	213
Chapter 28. - Guarantee Fund .....	219
PART V - PROBLEMS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO LETTER CARRIERS .....	223
Chapter 29. - Walks and Checks .....	225
Chapter 30. - Mail Sorting .....	230
Chapter 31. - Delivery of Mail .....	233
1. Maximum weight .....	233
2. Relay boxes .....	234
Number of relay boxes .....	234
Transportation of mail to relay boxes .....	234
Snow clearing .....	235
3. Rates .....	236
4. Parcel post .....	238
5. Second and third class mail .....	238
6. Two deliveries a day .....	240
7. Changes of address .....	241

	Page
8. Interpretation of regulations .....	241
Address labels .....	242
Mail to "occupant" .....	242
Apartment buildings .....	243
9. Miscellaneous .....	243
Suspension of delivery notification card .....	243
Enquiries .....	244
Classification of mail .....	244
Chapter 32. - Mailmobiles .....	245
Chapter 33. - Overtime for Letter Carriers .....	248
Chapter 34. - Dogs .....	252
Chapter 35. - Seasonal Changes of Uniform .....	254
PART VI - PROBLEMS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO RAILWAY MAIL CLERKS .....	255
Chapter 36. - Job Security .....	257
Chapter 37. - Hours of Work and Overtime .....	259
1. Hours of work .....	259
2. Overtime .....	261
Chapter 38. - Mileage Allowance and Layover Time .....	264
1. Mileage allowance .....	264
2. Layover time .....	265
Chapter 39. - Dead-heading .....	268
PART VII - SOME SPECIAL PROBLEMS .....	271
Chapter 40. - Public Relations .....	273
Chapter 41. - Methods and Standards .....	274
Chapter 42. - Personnel Administration .....	278
Closing Remarks .....	287

	Page
Appendices .....	289
A. List of places and dates of the hearings of the Commission and of briefs submitted .....	291
B. National Headquarters - Functional Chart .....	298
C. District Organization Chart .....	299
D. Post offices grades 17, 18 and 19 - Organization Chart .....	300
E. Post offices grade 16 - Organization Chart .....	301
F. List of staff post offices grades 14 to 19 inclusive .....	302
G. Table of wages and salaries for non-supervisory operating classes .....	303
H. Position Guide - Assistant Deputy Postmaster General - Personnel Administration .....	304
I. Position Guide - Director, Staffing .....	306
J. Position Guide - Director of Personnel Classification .....	309
K. Position Guide - Director, Programme Co-ordination and Employee Services .....	311
L. Position Guide - Director, Staff Relations .....	313
M. Position Guide - Chief, Personnel Administration - Major Post Offices .....	315
N. Position Guide - District Personnel Administrator .....	317
O. Chart of Present Organization - Personnel Branch .....	320
P. Chart of Proposed Organization - Personnel Branch .....	321
Q. Geographic distribution of employees in the Post Office Department - as of March 31, 1966 .....	322
List of Recommendations .....	323
Alphabetical Index .....	357

I N T R O D U C T I O N



## INTRODUCTION

At the time of the settlement of the strike in the latter part of July 1965, which had interrupted postal service at many locations in Canada, the Canadian Postal Employees' Association (now known as the Canadian Union of Postal Workers), the Federated Association of Letter Carriers (now known as the Letter Carriers' Union of Canada) and the Canadian Railway Mail Clerks' Federation requested an inquiry into the working conditions of postal employees.

The Government agreed with this request.

On the first of September 1965, on the recommendation of the Committee of the Privy Council, His Excellency the Governor General approved Order in Council P.C. 1965-1590 quoted at the beginning of this Report.

A few remarks are necessary concerning this Order in Council.

(1) When this Order was approved the matter of adjustment of salary rates for postal service employees was resolved for the moment.

Evidently for this reason the Committee of the Privy Council decided not to give the Commissioner any jurisdiction over the question of salaries as such.

(2) Apart from this restriction, it seemed evident to the Commissioner that the reference made in the Order in Council to "other conditions of employment applying to non-supervisory operating employees" was specific enough to include those conditions which could have financial or budgetary implications.

The Commissioner therefore, considered them within his sphere of authority. He believed not only that he had the right to study these problems but also that it was his duty to do so. Furthermore, he did not believe it appropriate to take into consideration subtle distinctions between "conditions of employment" and "working conditions". He accepted these words as synonymous.

(3) Another restriction became evident immediately, a restriction which was bound to affect the nature of the report required of the Commissioner.

The Order in Council clearly stated that the inquiry should deal with "grievances".

This Report will therefore, not contain remarks or observations on all working conditions of postal employees, but solely on grievances presented at the hearings.

(4) The expression "non-supervisory operating employees" covers, on the whole, all postal employees who, while under the control of their immediate supervisors, have an active part in the receipt, handling, conveyance and delivery of mail.<sup>1/</sup>

(5) Finally, the Commissioner believed that "the efficient operation of the postal service" has to be considered keeping in mind both "the public interest" and the "welfare of employees".

In his opinion, the public, while expecting a prompt, efficient and reliable postal service throughout the country, would not want this to be done at the expense of the postal employees.

Before the selection and appointment of the Commissioner, it had been agreed that while he alone would assume responsibility for the Report, he would be assisted in the performance of his duties by two advisers, one appointed by the Government and the other by the three staff organizations mentioned above.

Mr. Paul A. Faguy, at the time Director General of the Emergency Measures Organization, and Mr. Roméo Maione, then Assistant Director of International Affairs of the Canadian Labour Congress and now with the United Steel-workers of America, (Toronto) were appointed.

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<sup>1/</sup> Additional information on the composition and duties of these employees will be found in Chapter 2 of this Report.

The Commissioner would be remiss in not saying here and now how much he appreciated the unfailing help received from his advisers.

We worked together as a team and they both played a very active role in the inquiry. They always displayed sincerity and impartiality and the Commissioner profited greatly from their opinions, advice and experience.

Our most sincere thanks and gratitude to both of them.

The Commission began its work on September 6, 1965.

After a few preliminary meetings with the Deputy Postmaster General and a number of national officers of the staff organizations concerned, we travelled across the country and listened to all the representatives of the local branches of these organizations who wished to be heard.

In every town visited, we took the opportunity to meet the District Directors and the Postmasters of the area to discuss some of the problems or grievances submitted.

This part of the Commission's inquiry was concluded on March 18, 1966.<sup>1/</sup>

This procedure enabled the largest possible number of employees to state their points of view through their representatives or delegates.<sup>2/</sup>

However, it also gave rise to a problem: if several of the complaints made were similar or related, the remedial action suggested differed sometimes from one district or locality to another.

During the most recent meetings the Commission held with the national officers of the staff organizations,<sup>3/</sup> we attempted to obtain a firm statement of their position wherever there were differences of opinion.

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<sup>1/</sup> Appendix A lists the localities where the Commission held hearings, and the branches of the staff organizations which made presentations and of the briefs received.

<sup>2/</sup> More than 500 employees appeared before the Commission and the Transcript of the Evidence takes up more than 12,500 pages.

<sup>3/</sup> April 12, 13, 14, 1966.

We were not completely successful!

To ensure a complete study of all aspects of the problems, the Commission sent the departmental headquarters detailed questionnaires covering 65 different problem areas. This gave the Department time to reflect on each major problem and consult within the Department or with the control agencies. This technique was found, by all concerned, to be most useful.

During the weeks of March 28, April 18, May 9 and 16, the Commission, having received written replies to the questionnaires, reviewed all these subject matters with departmental headquarters.

Departmental headquarters stated its viewpoint openly and without the least bit of reticence on the significant problems raised by the employees. From time to time, as expected, it had to take into consideration that in the government hierarchy some policies and solutions are not within the control of the Post Office Department but rest with Parliament, the Cabinet, Treasury Board, the Civil Service Commission or even with another department.<sup>1/</sup>

The Commission then scrutinized all briefs, evidence, exhibits and information obtained. Here again it was a team effort.

The Commissioner and his two advisers analysed the viewpoints of all concerned in complete freedom. The advisers took a definite stand on each problem and informed the Commissioner accordingly as was their duty to do so.

As mentioned earlier, this Report must not be interpreted as reflecting the opinions either of Mr. Faguy or of Mr. Maione.

The Commission considered carefully the desirability of hiring outside consultants to help in arriving at more specific and detailed recommendations.

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<sup>1/</sup> The Commission discusses this aspect in greater detail in Chapter 4, "General Impressions".

It rejected this possibility because it became convinced that its role was to give an outline of the basic principles which, it believed, should be adopted by the Department, which should then see to their application in accordance with the most effective procedures.

At this point, the Commissioner would like to make two points quite clear.

(1) In some quarters, the Commission was criticized for having held private meetings and having sat in camera.

This decision was not unilateral but was taken with the consent of the interested parties, i.e., the national officers of the staff organizations, the Deputy Postmaster General and the Commission itself.

As the inquiry progressed, this stand proved to be both wise and useful. In order to carry out successfully an inquiry such as this, unique in its nature, the Commission had to let each person express himself in his own way. It was a golden opportunity to "get it off one's chest".

This certainly would not have been the case if every statement and remark had been written up in a newspaper or broadcast on the radio or television. One had to keep in mind that certain working conditions could involve individuals. On many occasions this was the case.

Some were surprised that the Commissioner allowed employees to present grievances or make suggestions which exceeded the Commissioner's mandate.

The latter readily admits that such was the case, but in turn is surprised that this attitude was questioned. After all, an inquiry is not a trial.

The Commissioner did not believe it to be his duty, while listening to the remarks and demands of all types of employees, to raise objections on his own authority and then settle the matters himself. He assumed that people would trust

him enough to know that, in his recommendations, he would confine himself strictly to the terms of reference of the Order in Council while allowing himself to make a few comments on questions exceeding his jurisdiction.

(2) The second clarification deals with quite a different matter.

During an interview with the Deputy Postmaster General, in September 1965, the latter stated that the Department had undertaken in recent months, or would soon undertake, a review of a number of specific problems affecting working conditions of employees. This review might, within a short period, mean modifications or changes to which the employees would probably react favourably.

We discussed, among other things, the implementation of new policies dealing with examinations, discipline and the grievance procedure.

The Commission enthusiastically welcomed these proposals and fully supported, beforehand, the adoption of any reform which would result in the improvement of the employees' working conditions.

Consequently, in several chapters of this Report, reference will be made to these new policies which are prompted by a firm resolution of the Department to improve its management practices in all possible fields. We leave it to others to decide whether or not the work done and the discussions held have influenced departmental headquarters in making further progress along these lines.

Before closing this introduction the Commissioner wishes to thank especially Mrs. Helen Roney, the Commission's secretary, for her zeal, devotion and kindness, and Mr. William J. Parker, whose services were made available by the Department of National Defence and whose studies, research, and work greatly facilitated the Commission's task.

In these acknowledgments we must mention the Royal Commission on Health Services in whose offices the Commissioner and his advisers worked for ever

twelve months and its staff who, under the direction of Mrs. Jessie Armstrong, have been most helpful. We must also mention Mrs. Suzanne Richard who acted as my private secretary.

The Commission was well received wherever it went and was always treated with great consideration. We could always rely on the unfailing co-operation and assistance of the representatives of the staff organizations concerned, of the Post Office administrative staff at all levels, and also of officers belonging to other departments, commissions and boards.



F O R E W O R D



## FOREWORD

Near the end of April and during the month of May 1966, the Government tabled four Bills. The first one in particular is of paramount importance to postal employees and all civil servants.

We are referring to Bills C-170 ("Public Service Staff Relations Act"), C-181 ("Public Service Employment Act"), C-182 ("An Act to amend the Financial Administration Act ") and S-35 ("Canada Labour (Safety) Code").

We obviously cannot ignore these Bills. On the other hand, at this time, we must admit openly that these Bills leave us rather perplexed.

It is very unlikely that they will be adopted as submitted. As we all know, Parliament entrusted a parliamentary committee with the preliminary study of these Bills. This committee is inviting staff organizations and employees' unions to appear. It is more than probable that having heard these groups and the appropriate government agencies, the committee will submit recommendations, some of which will mean amendments to the proposed Bills.

We cannot foresee the nature and extent of these amendments and since we do not wish to delay the presentation of our Report unduly, we have decided to refer to these Bills in our Report in their present form.

This approach will mean that the reader must be on his guard. Maybe some of our remarks may prove unnecessary or even erroneous because of amendments accepted before the final adoption of these Bills. We have no choice in the matter.

Whatever happens, these new Acts will inevitably change the background and atmosphere of staff relations in the public service in general and in the Post Office Department in particular. We not only stress this several times in the Report but also submit recommendations which perhaps Parliament will be good enough to consider.



P A R T I

THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT

AND ITS EMPLOYEES



## PART I

### EXPLANATORY NOTE

For a clear understanding of this Report and of the accompanying recommendations, but without losing sight of the limited scope of the Commission's mandate, Chapter 1 is devoted to a brief summary of the framework and structure of the field operating services which the Department has set up across the country to meet its commitments.

Chapter 2 deals with the duties of the non-supervisory operating staff inside this framework and structure. There again we shall not go into detail since in other parts of the Report we shall have to discuss many special aspects of the work of these employees.

Chapter 3 says something about the different organizations to which employees belong.

## CHAPTER 1

### THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT

#### FIELD OPERATING SERVICES

Section 3 of the Post Office Act<sup>1/</sup> reads as follows:

"There shall be a department of the Government of Canada called the Post Office Department, with headquarters at Ottawa, over which the Postmaster General appointed by commission under the Great Seal of Canada shall preside."

Section 4 adds:

"(1) The Governor in Council may appoint an officer called the Deputy Postmaster General, who is the deputy head of the Department and holds office during pleasure.

(2) Such other officers, clerks and employees as are necessary for the proper conduct of the business of the Department shall be appointed or employed in the manner authorized by law."

Sections 5 and 6 deal respectively with the powers of the Postmaster General to administer, superintend and manage the Canada Post Office and with the regulations he may make for its efficient operation as well as for carrying the purposes and provisions of the Act into effect.<sup>2/</sup>

Thus, -- and we could not express it any better in so few words, --

"The operations of the Post Office are many and varied -- forwarding personal and business correspondence, distributing information, transporting goods, facilitating financial settlements, widespread distribution of advertising and promotional material, and other services. These familiar tasks, woven into the fabric of our daily existence, affect local life, social interests and business operations in every neighbourhood. The Post Office, in performing them, is more than a vast public utility. It is a unifying force throughout the country."<sup>3/</sup>

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1/ R.S., 1952, c. 212, as amended.

2/ In other parts of the Report we shall quote from these two sections.

3/ The Royal Commission on Government Organization, Volume 3, Report 17, The Post Office, Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1962, p. 309.

To fulfil its responsibilities the Department has set up an internal and field organization well structured at the central<sup>1/</sup> as well as at the district<sup>2/</sup> and local levels.<sup>3/</sup>

First, let us look at the field operating services to which the non-supervisory operating staff belong.

These services are under the immediate control of the Assistant Deputy Postmaster General who "Conducts the normal field operation of the postal service to the Public".

He is "Responsible for the formulation of policies, procedures and regulations pertaining to the establishment, management, operation, maintenance and closing of Post Offices, Postal Stations, Postal Agencies, Sub Post Offices and Postal Routes".

He also has the responsibility to "Ensure that postal authorities in the field operate within these policies, procedures and regulations and that assistance is provided when required".<sup>4/</sup>

His principal assistant in this field is the director of postal service.

Together, with the help of various superintendents, they assume responsibility for services such as "Service Requirements", "Delivery Requirements", "Methods and Standards", "Quality Control", "Organization and Establishment", etc.<sup>5/</sup>

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1/ See Appendix B.

2/ See Appendix C.

3/ See Appendices D and E.

4/ Canada Post Office, Personnel Manual, Vol. 2, "Organization".

5/ See Appendix B.

The Department has divided the country into 14 districts, four in the Province of Ontario, two in each of the Provinces of Quebec and Alberta and six in the seven remaining provinces.<sup>1/</sup>

Heading each district is a director responsible for the management and operation of the postal service in the area under his jurisdiction. He must operate within departmental policies, directives and regulations.

He directs all activities relating to the handling of mail and its transportation. He develops certain practices and procedures or submits proposals for changes in policies to Headquarters. He manages the supporting services such as administration, investigations, personnel and public relations.

In other words, the director develops and maintains the necessary controls over all aspects of the postal service in his district.

A director has several immediate assistants at the district headquarters.<sup>2/</sup>

In each district there are a number of staff post offices, postal stations, semi-staff post offices, revenue post offices, sub post offices.

The staff post offices are the most important. There are approximately 375 in Canada, divided into 11 grades (grades 9 to 19) according to the work load, the postal revenue, the requirements of the postal service, etc.

Each of these post offices is headed by a postmaster who, except in the case of staff post offices grades 19, 18 and 17, reports to the district director.<sup>3/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> The Province of Prince Edward Island is included in the New Brunswick district.

<sup>2/</sup> See Appendix C.

<sup>3/</sup> Five cities amongst the staff post offices enjoy a special status. These are Montreal and Toronto (grade 19), Vancouver (grade 18), Winnipeg and Ottawa (grade 17).

These post offices do not come under the jurisdiction of the district director of their areas. Each one is autonomous and is managed by a postmaster who reports directly to the Assistant Deputy Postmaster General. This postmaster has also immediate assistants who work at the main city post office. See Appendix D.

The Semi-staff Post Offices number approximately 1,400. They are classified into groups (31 to 34 inclusive) determined by the volume of work and, to some extent, revenue. These are also managed by a Postmaster.

Revenue Post Offices are those where the revenue does not normally exceed \$3,000 per year. They make up groups 1 to 30 inclusive. There are about 6,655 of them. The postmasters of these post offices are appointed in accordance with the provisions of the Post Office Act and their salaries depend on the revenues of these post offices.

The person in charge of a Sub Post Office usually operates another business at the same time. Sub Post Offices are considered to be branches of a main Post Office and there are about 2,249 of them. The Postmaster General appoints the person in charge, who is often called a "Sub Postmaster". He is paid a commission out of postal revenue.

The employees of Revenue and Sub Post Offices are hired and paid by the person for whom they work. They are not part of the non-supervisory operating staff dealt with in this Report.

This short summary would be incomplete if we did not point out that in certain areas of the country the Department still operates railway post offices. This service is performed by railway mail clerks who belong to the group with which we are concerned.

Besides the field operating services it should be noted, because it will be referred to several times, that the Department has a personnel service managed by a director who reports directly to the Deputy Postmaster General.

This directorate is divided into various sections such as "Employment", "Staff Development and Training", "Headquarters Personnel Office" and "Pay and Benefits".<sup>1/</sup>

These few remarks are sufficient to illustrate to what extent the Post Office Department, under existing circumstances, has had to be set up like a large business concern with offices or branches scattered throughout the country.

Therefore, the Post Office, as a Department, has truly a special status which explains to a high degree the problems referred to our Commission.

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<sup>1/</sup> See Appendix B, and the Canada Post Office, Personnel Manual, Vol. 2, "Organization".

## CHAPTER 2

### NON-SUPERVISORY OPERATING EMPLOYEES

A number of classes of employees are included in this category.

(1) There are the postal clerks. Under this general term, we group postal clerks 1 and 2, mail despatchers, mail handlers and postal chauffeurs. These employees together number approximately 12,200.

(2) There is the letter carrier group which, including supervisory letter carriers,<sup>1/</sup> totals approximately 10,400.

These postal clerks and letter carriers work in staff post offices.<sup>2/</sup>

(3) Railway mail clerks 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 still carrying out postal service in railway post offices number approximately 350.

(4) There are some 129 maintenance workers and 3,100 part-time employees who, in staff post offices, carry out some of the duties of postal clerks or sometimes of letter carriers.

Therefore, in the field operating services these non-supervisory operating employees make up a staff of more than 26,150 people.

(5) To this total must be added the so-called "casual" employees who work in staff post offices as postal clerks or letter carriers and whose number varies from month to month and reaches approximately 1,000.

All of these non-supervisory operating employees are of course governed by the Post Office Act but only the postal clerks, letter carriers, railway mail

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<sup>1/</sup> Hereafter, unless otherwise indicated, we shall not specify that the term "Letter Carriers" includes "Supervisory Letter Carriers".

<sup>2/</sup> 65% work in post offices, grades 14 to 19. See Appendix F.

clerks and maintenance employees are civil servants, coming under the provisions of the Civil Service Act.

Likewise, only the above-mentioned categories, as well as part-time employees, are considered as being in the regular employment of the Department on a permanent basis.<sup>1/</sup>

Briefly, the duties of postal clerks, letter carriers and railway mail clerks, and the main qualifications required to perform the duties, are as follows:

1. Postal Workers

Postal Clerks

Postal clerks receive, sort and forward the mail. As required, they handle mail bags.<sup>2/</sup>

Sorting and forwarding duties require special knowledge on the part of the postal clerk. He has to memorize a great many mail destination points. Most of this knowledge must be on an instant recall basis because he is expected to work at such a speed that he does not really have time to ponder or refer to the printed information made available to him.

Some postal clerks work as wicket clerks. They are in daily contact with the public. They carry out various financial transactions with which they must be familiar and for which they are accountable.<sup>3/</sup>

---

1/ The problems raised by postal clerks and letter carriers concerning part-time and casual employees are considered in the Report.

2/ The word "mail" as used here and subsequently must be understood in an extremely broad sense. Thus, it includes all categories of letters, packages or parcels of various dimensions, newspapers, periodicals, magazines, pamphlets, folders, and even circulars and samples.

3/ The distinctions made by the Department between the duties of postal clerks 1 and 2 are discussed in Chapter 9.

#### Mail Despatchers

Mail despatchers are responsible for the loading of mail bags in their proper sequence and in accordance with a schedule drawn up for the forwarding of mail bags by a direct or indirect route. They also look after the unloading of these bags. They must have a thorough knowledge of distribution and know something about timetables and points of connection. They normally supervise staffs of different sizes. They maintain records and write reports.

#### Mail Handlers

Mail handlers help despatchers load and unload mail bags. In sections other than the despatching section, they receive, open and empty bags. They move mail trollies and binnies. When required, they perform what the Department calls "simple" sorting duties.

#### Postal Chauffeurs

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Postal chauffeurs operate post office vehicles. They load and unload them. They deliver mail, particularly parcels of certain dimensions which are not carried by letter carriers. Postal chauffeurs place mail in the relay boxes along letter carrier routes and make letter box collections.

#### 2. Letter Carriers

Before starting out on their walks letter carriers prepare mail for delivery according to the line of travel indicated. This requires them to handle mail bags, to sort the mail into a case by placing it in order of delivery, to bundle and tie it, to list registered items and to take out, before leaving, the C.O.D.'s and shortpaid mail. They must then deliver their mail from door to door, obtain if necessary receipts or collect the amounts due according to the

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1/ There remain only 36 full-time postal chauffeurs. The Department now makes use of the services of independent contractors who have their own employees.

nature of the mail. They are accountable on a daily basis for this mail.

### 3. Supervisory Letter Carriers

Supervisory letter carriers replace letter carriers on their rotation days off or replace those on annual, sick or special leave. As required, they check letter carrier walks and write reports accordingly. Sometimes they supervise a group of letter carriers or assist with the training of inexperienced employees.

In their daily work, postal clerks and letter carriers come under the supervision and immediate orders of postal officers 1, 2 or 3 who, one might say, are their foremen.

### 4. Railway Mail Clerks

Generally speaking and without making any distinctions with regards to classification grades 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, railway mail clerks load and unload mail bags and carry them between the storage and the postal trucks. In the railway post offices they open and dump bags, cancel, sort and tie up the mail according to one or more procedures. They distribute all or part of this mail along the route. At the railway stations they take possession of other incoming mail and give it the same treatment so as to be able to deliver it to in-between points en route or at the terminals. They keep records of mail received and forwarded.

From this summary we conclude that the non-supervisory operating employees of the Post Office Department, except for mail handlers who do not sort mail, carry out work which may be classed as semi-skilled and which it is difficult to compare with any other work in the civil service, industry or business.

This conclusion will become even more obvious as we discuss the conditions under which these employees carry out their daily work.<sup>1/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> See Appendix G for a table of salary rates and scales of these employees as of the 1st August, 1965.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE STAFF ORGANIZATIONS

The vast majority of postal employees referred to in the preceding chapter belong to unions. However, they do not all belong to the same staff organization.

Thus, usually, most of the postal clerks in Staff Post Offices and some assistants in Semi-staff Post Offices are members of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers.

As of June 1966, this Union had a membership of 11,400, or approximately 93% of the potential membership. These members are divided into 520 separate locals.

The vast majority of letter carriers are members of the Letter Carriers' Union of Canada.

In June 1966, this Union numbered 8,871 members out of a possible 10,400, or slightly more than 85% of the potential. These members are divided into 187 separate locals.

For some time now neither the Canadian Union of Postal Workers nor the Letter Carriers' Union of Canada has accepted into its ranks Postal Officers grades 1, 2 and 3 and part-time or casual postal employees.

Most railway mail clerks are members of the Canadian Railway Mail Clerks' Federation. Also included are some surplus railway mail clerks who are now employed in some other capacity.

These three organizations are affiliated with the Canadian Labour

Congress. In addition, the Canadian Railway Mail Clerks' Federation is affiliated with the Civil Service Federation of Canada, whose representatives appeared before the Commission on May 19, 1966.

The national officers of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, the Letter Carriers' Union of Canada and the Canadian Railway Mail Clerks' Federation have formed a joint committee named the "Postal Workers' Brotherhood". This should help them to present a united front in the forthcoming negotiation of collective agreements with the Department.

There are also about 1,000 postal clerks, mail handlers, letter carriers, part-time or casual employees who have retained their membership in the Civil Service Association of Canada from which the Commission received representations.

In Montreal and Quebec at the beginning of 1966, a group of part-time employees organized a local of the Canadian Union of Public Employees.

Before concluding, it should be noted that the president of a sixth organization, i.e., the Canadian Postmasters' Association, met the Commission at Regina, Saskatchewan. It is mostly composed of rural postmasters and assistants attached to semi-staff post offices.

The problems raised by this Association exceed the terms of reference of the Commission's mandate and cannot be included in any recommendation made by the Commission.

We hope that the Post Office Department will, as soon as possible, find the time and the means to look into the problems of the rural postmasters and their assistants and to solve them if possible.

P A R T   II

G E N E R A L   I M P R E S S I O N S



## CHAPTER 4

### GENERAL IMPRESSIONS

(1) A large number of the post office employees' grievances are, first and foremost, human relations problems.

Except in one or two districts, the attitude of some supervisors and postmasters towards their employees leaves much to be desired. These people have only a vague notion of the importance of maintaining good relations with their staff. This is one of the main reasons why the national leaders of the staff organizations do not share the opinion expressed in the Report of the Royal Commission on Government Organization that "morale is very high" in the Post Office Department.<sup>1/</sup>

The action of those in authority has and always will have a tremendous influence on the reactions of employees and on their productivity. Complaints arising from their behavior can be sometimes difficult to explain, but real or imaginary, they should be studied carefully and the necessary remedies applied or explanations given to reduce the seriousness of misunderstandings or to clear them up.

We heard too often of postmasters or supervisors who consider themselves almost infallible or who, under the pretext of maintaining at any cost their conception of order and discipline, obstinately refuse to change any decisions taken at a lower level.

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<sup>1/</sup> Volume 3, Report 17, paragraph 17, p. 342.

The forthcoming collective bargaining will only increase the implications and consequences of the sayings and doings of all supervisors at every administrative level. It will be important to think much more carefully before taking action in order to avoid provoking too many recourses to the grievance procedure, and creating unnecessary difficulties and troubles for headquarters.

Hence a well-conceived policy of consultation and of exchange of viewpoints at all levels becomes essential.<sup>1/</sup> The dialogue must not become a mere formality to which one has to submit and which is considered more or less a waste of time or mere idle chatter. Nor must it become a one-sided conversation. One is not taking part in the dialogue if he refuses to consider the pros and cons of another person's opinions and persists in seeing only his own viewpoint. In other words, it is essential that there be absolute good faith on both sides and that it be expressed in a climate of frankness and loyalty without fear of reprisals.

A senior member of the Whitley Council in the United Kingdom said: "When in doubt consult!". We would hasten to add: "Do not hesitate to have doubts". The same person also said that for every act of negotiation there are ten of consultation.

We are firmly convinced that a well-conceived method of communication between the administration and the national, regional and local leaders of the staff organizations and also between supervisors and employees will create eventually in the Department an atmosphere of trust and mutual understanding and ensure a spirit of co-operation and helpfulness which will benefit everyone.

Such a policy will help to raise the employees' morale. It is a well known fact that good morale increases efficiency and productivity, is thought provoking, that it stimulates initiative, and brings more satisfaction in the fulfilling of responsibilities.

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<sup>1/</sup> See Chapter 6, "Consultation", for specific recommendations.

The Department did not conceal its concern over morale. It was quite evident that it did not wish to spare any effort to have the Department adjust itself to new concepts of co-operation.

These new concepts are not meant to deprive management of its right to manage. They are conducive instead to ensuring the full co-operation of all of the staff in the improvement of working conditions and the maintenance of an efficient postal service.

We hope that the Department will succeed in convincing its district directors, postmasters and supervisory staff not only to accept these concepts, but also to put them into practice without reservations. It is true that the anticipated results will be obtained only if each and everyone, in every field service, makes an effort to accept them. Instructions and directives are somewhat like laws: however good and progressive they may be, they are often only as good as the people who have been entrusted with their enforcement.

Also, we hope that the employees' representatives will prove to be willing to participate in this evolution already started. These representatives have not only rights but also duties and responsibilities. Some are rebelling to the point that they are alarmingly unwilling to compromise. In everyone's best interest, they will have to learn to be more conciliatory, more understanding, and more reasonable. They will change their attitude if they have the very definite impression that they are receiving all the consideration they are entitled to as employees' representatives. There are always two sides to a coin. And if there is any area where it is important to know when to make allowances, and agree, at the opportune moment, to acceptable compromises, it is in the field of consultation, especially when it is inspired by a true desire to co-operate.

We believe that under these terms staff relations in the Department will become what they ought to be, and that the Department, together with the staff organizations and the employees themselves will ensure that they remain cordial and frank.

(2) We were impressed with the difficulties which the Department often faces, depending on the nature of the working conditions. It is not always master of the situation. Solutions sometimes are not within its control. This type of situation is not very helpful in its relations with employees.

These employees are among a large group of civil servants and, as such, are subject to certain Statutes which fall within the exclusive jurisdiction of Parliament and over which the Department has no control. This legislation affects several aspects of the terms and conditions of employment of these civil servants and binds the Department to such an extent that it cannot either ignore them or modify them to meet needs which are reasonable or even desirable, as far as it is concerned. Also, the Department does not have the authority necessary to satisfy its employees' requests on matters which are governed by the Civil Service Commission, Treasury Board, any other department, or central agencies.

This is the price the Department has to pay when a system remains at the same time centralized and decentralized. This is too often the cause of frustrations and employees complain bitterly every time their employer is forced to stand aside and leave the responsibilities to others.

(3) It must be recognized, however, that there is a vast sphere of activities where the Department has complete control. It can be credited with excellent achievements and plans which show promise. On the other hand, there are quite serious gaps which should be corrected without delay.

a) In line with the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Government Organization, the Department has, for the last two or three years, been attempting to keep up with the times and to utilize modern management techniques. Accordingly, Headquarters has delegated many of its responsibilities and authorities to district directors and postmasters. These in turn have delegated to their immediate assistants, and others in lower positions, duties and responsibilities which they had never assumed before. In fact, the Post Office Department has adopted a far more advanced decentralization policy than many other departments.

This policy was and still is sound. However, such a drastic change of attitude was not accomplished smoothly and without difficulties, especially since several members of the management staff in the field did not have enough training to assume these duties on short notice. The Department had two choices: either wait until everyone could carry out his new duties in an almost perfect manner and thus delay the long-term program -- or put it into practice immediately and take the risk of having to correct inevitable hitches of varying degrees of importance. The Department chose the better alternative.

b) Other important factors came into play.

The rapid expansion of our country has had repercussions on the whole postal service; the almost unforeseeable increase in the volume of mail, the rapid development of several large centres, the movement of population, the necessary recourse to more modern means of transportation, the difficulties of recruiting labour in some places, the competition of large industries with regards to wage levels and general working conditions, the increase in night work, the make-up of a larger number of shifts at unusual hours, etc.

All of these factors have influenced the Department's day to day relations with its employees. They caused certain problems to which the Department did not always give serious consideration because it did not care to agree to any concession which might affect in any way the speed and efficiency of the postal service.

If we had to explain this conduct we would be inclined to ascribe it to a state of mind rather than to a considered and intentional policy. There are some senior employees in the higher grades in the Department who have been promoted from the ranks but still have the attitudes which were prevalent at that time. They did not keep up with the times and, consciously or unconsciously, they refuse to do so. They are living in the past. They have a decided tendency to sacrifice the morale and welfare of the employees to their idea of an unequalled postal service.

This lack of moderation, or this attitude, which prevents people from seeing the tremendous possibilities of a policy of a happy medium, has caused strong resentment amongst employees.

c) We have noticed serious deficiencies in personnel administration at all levels.

These may be due to the enormous difficulties which most departments experience in recruiting really competent men for this type of work which has become highly specialized. Whatever the reason may be, the Department is in dire need of such men. Many personnel officers in local offices have not been trained adequately for personnel work. We do not cast any doubt on their sincerity and desire to do their best. These people, whether

because they have to perform too many incidental or secondary duties or because they see their function as that of disciplinarians or schoolmasters, do not, at times, fulfil their responsibilities in this area of work which covers so many different kinds of activities.

We deal with this vital problem of Personnel Administration in Chapter 42 of our Report, since we were astonished when some representatives and branch delegates admitted not knowing the name of their own district personnel officer.

(4) It is normal for an organization as large as the Post Office Department not to always recognize its own deficiencies.

To cope with this problem it is suggested that the Department not only continue but also intensify its program of staff rotation in order to benefit from different opinions, even though we are aware of the difficulties and opposition that this approach might arouse. It is equally essential to bring new blood into some of the key positions of the post office organization. A few strong personalities, unfamiliar with the ways and customs of the postal service, should bring about changes and stir those who do not see a need for such changes.

The Department can derive great benefit from the program instituted by the Civil Service Commission for the rotation of administrators as part of a better career planning program. It must strive to obtain closer co-operation or more effective and prompt action from those other agencies which are responsible for the physical and environmental working conditions and for the general atmosphere in the working areas.

We would like these agencies to co-operate fully and assist the Department by delegating the necessary powers, and the financial means not now available, as and when required.

The implementation of collective bargaining with its accompanying discussions and negotiations, together with the institution of a grievance procedure, will help resolve a good number of the problems. A progressive and understanding attitude on the part of everyone concerned will do the rest.

Our Inquiry would not have been called had all the privileges mentioned in the preceding paragraphs been granted to employees at the right time.

Our Commission was greatly impressed by the Department's efforts to give the public the best possible service. On the other hand, the employees showed, by their attitude and statements, that they too are anxious to work in a progressive postal service and that they are proud to provide such a service.

(5) The need for rapid and almost instantaneous service continually came up in our discussions with Management. From the moment a piece of mail arrives, every effort is made to deal with it speedily - except for certain types of circulars. The people of Canada certainly are well served by the Post Office Department and we cannot but commend both the Department and its employees.

This preoccupation for speed, however, must not sweep aside every other consideration. Even though we are sure that the people of Canada want an excellent service, we are also just as sure that they do not want this at the expense of the employees' welfare.

Better schedules for mail handling could be put into effect in certain localities in order to improve hours of work and shift schedules, to facilitate transportation and parking, to prevent, at least partially, the constant recurrence of peak periods in the evening, to reduce weekend and night work and, finally, to restrict and bring to normal proportions the use of part-time and casual employees.

In this connection, a vast field of study presents itself: the flow of mail.

An even flow of work through the various post office operations would facilitate the settlement of many of the more serious grievances. We do not hesitate to recommend that outside consultants be hired to study thoroughly the complex problem of workloads and employment of full-time staff wherever possible. We believe that such a study would lead to greater efficiency and probable savings, while still providing an excellent service to the general public and improving the morale of the employees.

(6) We should admit we were surprised that little mention was made of mechanization and automation by the postal clerks who will evidently be the first ones affected. Possibly they see this problem only far in the future. We believe this is a problem of prime importance which should be looked into immediately by all interested parties, since its effect will be very serious not only on job security but also on job classification, seniority, etc.

We conclude this review of the most vivid impressions received during our Inquiry and anticipate that they will be read and understood without prejudice and animosity. It is hoped that they will reflect the confidence we have that, with the good will of the Department and the co-operation of the staff organizations and of the employees themselves, their working conditions and the Canadian postal service will continue to improve.



P A R T   I I I

C O M M O N   P R O B L E M S   O F   A

G E N E R A L   N A T U R E



## CHAPTER 5

### COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Of all the problems raised before the Commission collective bargaining in particular deserves high priority, not only because of the number of times it was brought up, but also, because of the vigour, zeal and enthusiasm exhibited by the employees in presenting it and setting forth the undeniable advantages which would be derived from collective bargaining in the improvement of their working conditions in the Post Office Department.

It is the firm hope, we might even say the constant desire, of postal employees to obtain from Parliament recognition of their right to have collective bargaining and conclude collective agreements with the Department.<sup>1/</sup>

In order to achieve this goal, local branch representatives of the staff organizations, and their national officers, put forward several suggestions which, we believe, should be summarized and commented upon.

To their way of thinking, the solution is easy. Working from the viewpoint that the transformation of the Post Office Department into a Crown Corporation, or into a department with a special status, does not give rise to any insurmountable difficulty but in itself is desirable as much for them as for the Canadian public, they therefore recommend the adoption of amendments to sections 53, 54 and 55 of the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation

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<sup>1/</sup> Bill C-170 (Public Service Staff Relations Act) had not yet been tabled when we finished our hearings with the staff organizations.

Act.<sup>1/</sup> This would mean then the full application of this Act to postal employees with the granting of all the rights they are bent on obtaining, i.e., - free discussion initiated on a voluntary and equal basis of all their working conditions, followed by conciliation, if necessary, and possible recourse to strike action in case of a deadlock.

We must recognize that Bill C-170 (Public Service Staff Relations Act) satisfies these aspirations only in part.

On the other hand, even if it is too early to pass final judgment on this Bill it seems to contain the machinery and procedures which, even though complex, should at least be put to the test.

(1) The scope of Bill C-170 is general. It applies without distinction to all departments listed in Schedule A to the Financial Administration Act,<sup>2/</sup> including the Post Office Department, as well as to an impressive number of commissions, agencies, offices or boards directly or indirectly under the control of the Federal Government excluding, for the time being, those portions of the public service of Canada to which the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act applies.<sup>3/</sup>

The designation of the Post Office Department as a Crown Corporation is therefore not foreseen by this Bill. However, this is still possible.

It was impossible, during our Inquiry, within our limited terms of reference, to touch on more than one aspect of this difficult question.

Notwithstanding this and taking into consideration:

- a) Bill C-170 for the Staff Relations in the Public Service;

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1/ R.S., 1952, c. 152, as amended.

2/ Ibid., c. 116, as amended.

3/ See Bill C-170, section 4.

- b) the basic reforms which the Post Office Department intends to adopt or which it has already put into force;<sup>1/</sup>
- c) the reforms which the Department of Public Works is carrying out at present in the decentralization and improvement of its service;
- d) the plans of the Department of National Health and Welfare and the Department of Labour for the improvement of working conditions, which we have been told, are about to be formulated;

we believe that the designation of the Post Office as a Crown Corporation is premature.

This does not mean that we do not agree with the views expressed by Mr. Justice J.C. Anderson in the final report of the Commission of Inquiry on Pay Rate Increases for Group D Employees.<sup>2/</sup>

The Government should proceed with a serious and thorough study so that it may make its position clear, once and for all, on the advisability of giving the Post Office Department the status of a Crown Corporation. Due consideration should be given to the national interest as well as to the economic and social implications of such a change.

(2) Bill C-170 recognizes the right of membership to staff organizations and the freedom to exercise it; it also protects this right. It sets up the rules and certification procedures to be carried out by the Public Service Staff Relations Board and, undoubtedly, these will enable the staff organizations concerned to act as bargaining agents for postal workers, letter carriers and railway mail clerks grouped into one or more units.

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1/ In the following chapters we refer to several of these reforms.

2/ Pages 15 to 18.

Once these formalities have been settled, the staff organizations will be in a position to take up with the employer<sup>1/</sup> for study and discussion all but a few working conditions affecting the employees they represent.

Thus, and this by no means exhausts the list, the negotiations will relate to salary rates, hours of work, overtime, premiums or special allowances for abnormal working hours, rights to leave, seniority, standards of discipline, the grievance procedure, the collection of fees, trade union security (including the Rand Formula) and other conditions.

Without going any further into these forthcoming negotiations, and since the postal employees discussed the Rand Formula so often, it appears to be a desirable proposal for the Post Office Department. As already noted<sup>2/</sup> only a very small minority of these employees do not belong to any of the staff organizations concerned. It is only fair and reasonable that this minority, without being forced in any way to exercise its right of membership, should contribute to the maintenance of the unions and associations that work unceasingly to obtain better working conditions.

Previously we referred to a few restrictions in bargaining.

They are those set forth in Bill C-170, section 56 (2), which reads as follows:

"No collective agreement shall provide, directly or indirectly, for the alteration or elimination of any existing term or condition of employment or the establishment of any new term or condition of employment,

- a) the alteration or elimination of which or the establishment of which, as the case may be,

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<sup>1/</sup> According to Bill C-170, section 2 (o), the expression "employer" means Her Majesty in Right of Canada as represented by the Treasury Board.

<sup>2/</sup> See Chapter 3, "The Staff Organizations".

would require or have the effect of requiring the enactment or amendment of any legislation by Parliament, except for the purpose of appropriating moneys required for its implementation, or b) that has been or may be, as the case may be, established pursuant to any Act specified in Schedule B."

Schedule B referred to includes the Public Service Employment Act, (Bill C-181), the Government Employees Compensation Act<sup>1/</sup> and the Public Service Superannuation Act.<sup>2/</sup>

Some of the subjects which seem to be specifically excluded from bargaining are "...the standards, procedures or processes governing the appointment, appraisal, promotion, demotion, transfer, lay-off or release of employees..."<sup>3/</sup> These exclusions obviously point to the government's firm intention of leaving with the Civil Service Commission the same jurisdiction it now has in these matters.

In comparison with the private sector, these restrictions will therefore limit discussion in certain specific cases, some of which are reviewed in this Report and are also the subject of recommendations.

After careful consideration and based on our hearings, we are under the impression that, on the whole, postal employees will agree to give this new legislation a fair trial even if they would still prefer to come under the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act.

(3) They will adopt this attitude largely because Bill C-170 does

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1/ R.S., 1952, c. 134, as amended.

2/ R.S., 1952-53, c. 47, as amended.

3/ Bill C-170, section 70 (3). It should be noted that the reference to the "release of employees" relates only to release because of incompetence.

give them a choice between binding and final arbitration and conciliation followed by the right to strike.<sup>1/</sup>

Everyone is aware of their preference in the matter.

It is hoped that employees will use discretion and moderation in exercising this right and will not lose sight of the serious problems and difficulties which any interruption in the postal service, however brief, imposes on the public.

Finally, we hope that the staff organizations, as well as the postal employees, will be satisfied at having obtained, at last, official recognition of their right to participate in collective bargaining and to reach agreements. We hope also that they will not only prepare themselves accordingly and call for the assistance of experts they may need, but will show, as will the employer, a spirit of good faith and co-operation.

WE RECOMMEND:

1. That the staff organizations concerned willingly agree to give a fair trial to the methods and procedures of collective bargaining which are contained in Bill C-170 entitled "Public Service Staff Relations Act" if this Bill should remain in its present form.
2. That the appropriate authorities proceed very shortly with a thorough study of the advisability of according the Post Office Department the status of a Crown Corporation, taking into due consideration the national interest as well as the economic and social consequences of such a change.

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1/ We have been given to understand that the "employer" has no intention of claiming that postal employees fit into that class of employees "...whose duties consist in whole or in part of duties the performance of which at any particular time or after any specified period of time is or will be necessary in the interest of the safety or security of the public". See Bill C-170, section 79 (1).

## CHAPTER 6

### CONSULTATION

With a few exceptions, postal employees recognize that management, whether at the national, regional or local level, is quite willing to meet with their representatives. This is about as far as it goes.<sup>1/</sup>

The atmosphere in which discussions begin or are carried out during meetings was rather sharply criticized. Many references were made to the unsatisfactory results which too often follow.

Without going into all the details, we were told that in some post offices there is no real exchange of views, that discussions lead nowhere or that decisions are made in advance and prove unalterable.

It was said that authority was too centralized. There were complaints about some district directors or postmasters refusing to exercise their discretionary powers outlined in directives and instructions and who frequently prefer to refer back to Headquarters. Hence there were unnecessary delays, which employees said were exasperating.

Finally, along the same lines, they criticized several local and district personnel officers. They contended that in some places no one knew these officials and that these officers ignored the employees. The personnel officers were taken

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<sup>1/</sup> We referred to this problem in Chapter 4, "General Impressions".

to task for not trying to establish a closer relationship with the employees and for concerning themselves almost constantly with disciplinary or administrative  
1/ matters.

The Department without agreeing with all these grievances recognized that there was undoubtedly some basis for these allegations.

A few reasons or explanations came to mind.

Until now, the Department has not set up a properly organized system of consultation, or communication and exchange of views with its employees. It has let matters take their own course and has not made a clear-cut distinction between questions which should form the subject of consultation and other matters which logically belong to an appropriate grievance procedure.  
2/ It did not put forth the necessary effort to convince its own district and local officials of the need and advantages of such a system. It did not strive to progress rapidly but adopted a wait and see attitude.

A change in attitude is essential. The Department has realized this and its officials expressed their desire and firm intention to correct this situation. The decision taken on the 2nd February 1966, at a meeting with the Union of Postal Workers, proved that from now on the Department not only will advise the Union in advance of any major change which it intends to make affecting the working conditions of postal workers, but also will seek the Union's viewpoint before implementing any major change. This decision can only bring favourable results, provided that the exchange of views is carried out in an objective manner.

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1/ See Chapter 42, "Personnel Administration".

2/ See Chapter 17, "Grievance Procedure".

Our Inquiry, however, has convinced us of the advisability of adopting a similar policy at the local level in the field operating services.

In the majority of Staff Post Offices, problems are often raised affecting the working conditions of employees as a whole or as a group. For example, this is the case in matters dealing with:

- a) changes in the establishment of shift schedules;
- b) the beginning and the end of the "Christmas Rush";
- c) the shortage of full-time staff;
- d) the rearrangement of some letter carriers' walks;  
1/
- e) equipment and supplies, etc.

Usually, the solution to these problems rests either with the postmaster himself, or with the postmaster after being authorized by the district director or with the latter's participation.

It is not suggested that things be done differently. The setting up and maintaining of a procedure, intended to facilitate a frank and productive exchange of views between district directors or postmasters and their staffs, does not imply a restriction or a curtailment of the rights of management. This procedure is solely intended to enable employees to express themselves freely concerning the conditions in which they work and, if need be, to make specific suggestions.

It should be remembered that these employees are the main parties concerned and that they are the ones who must live every hour of their working day in accordance with the directives and orders issued.

Before a postmaster makes a decision or even before he implements, in consultation with the district director, a general policy dealing with the working

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1/ It is probable that these working conditions and others will, before long, be governed by collective agreements.

conditions, he would be wise to meet with the employees' local representatives, to inform them and discuss his intentions, in order to obtain their reactions and take them into consideration, as much as possible. We believe that this procedure must be extended to the study and discussion of all other questions of the same kind which the employees' representatives want to bring up on their own.

WE RECOMMEND:

3. That, starting immediately, two local joint committees be set up in every Staff Post Office, grades 14 to 19 inclusive, one for the postal clerks and the other for letter carriers.
4. That these committees, depending upon local conditions, be composed of an equal number of representatives of the postal clerks or letter carriers and of representatives of local management.
5. That these committees hold meetings at least once a month.
6. That all questions of general interest dealing with local working conditions of postal workers or letter carriers be the subject of discussions, negotiations and recommendations in these committees.
7. That Headquarters issue precise instructions to district directors and postmasters to make available to these committees all the information available which might help solve the problems under review.
8. That, in order to facilitate these consultations, an agenda be drawn up of a permanent but flexible nature and that minutes of these meetings be taken, written up, approved and distributed to all concerned.
9. That the local joint committees be kept informed of the concrete results obtained from their discussions, of the progress made, or the difficulties encountered.
10. That, in cases of disagreement, the representatives of the local branches on these committees be allowed to report back to their members and that these branches, through their officers and with or without the assistance of their area representatives, make representations to the district director or postmaster in post offices, grades 17, 18 and 19.
11. That, where disagreements are not settled, reports be sent to the national officers of the organizations.

12. That the same type of local joint committees be set up in every Staff Post Office, grades 9 to 13 inclusive, if such is the wish of the majority of the employees in these Post Offices.
13. That the same procedure apply in the case of railway mail clerks at the district level.

We do not want to make these recommendations more precise but prefer to leave it to the parties concerned to adapt them to local conditions.

Our remarks are sufficiently clear to indicate the importance of the problem.

These matters are discussed in several other chapters and we shall point out a number of specific problem areas where it would seem both advisable and desirable to make use of joint committees.

There is one other main point which should be noted. During interviews with some district directors and postmasters, we discovered, to our surprise, that they knew nothing about some of the local or regional grievances.

There may be two good reasons for this: either the employees - and some have admitted it - believed, rightly or wrongly, that it was a waste of time and effort to refer these grievances to the district director or postmaster, or, tired of getting nowhere, they decided, in the light of past experience, that the district director was incapable of settling these grievances and so forwarded them directly to their national officers.

We disapprove of this practice because it undermines the very foundation of the role and authority of the district directors who, on the whole, do not deserve such treatment. It also means referring to the national officers of the staff organizations and to the Post Office National Headquarters problems which, very often, should be resolved at the local or district level.

Our recommendations are meant to correct these gaps by setting up permanent channels of communication. With a few exceptions only far-reaching questions of general application should be referred to National Headquarters.

There is no problem in regard to a dialogue at the national level since all concerned, departmental representatives and the national officers of the staff organizations, expressed their hope that they would be able to improve the new policy of consultation and to make it more effective.

WE RECOMMEND:

14. That two national joint committees be set up at Ottawa, one for postal workers and one for letter carriers.
15. That, as far as possible, these committees be set up and operate in the same manner as the local joint committees.
16. That all matters of general interest dealing with working conditions of postal workers or letter carriers, on a national basis, be the subject of discussions, negotiations and recommendations in these committees.
17. That railway mail clerks benefit from the same advantages in accordance with a procedure adapted to their own conditions of work.

## CHAPTER 7

### DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

<sup>1/</sup>  
Earlier in our Report we referred to the tendency of Departmental Headquarters to delegate a good deal of its authority to its district directors and postmasters, particularly in the field operating services. This policy of decentralization which the Department initiated gained even more impetus after the Report of the Royal Commission on Government Organization was published. The Post Office Department, perhaps more than some other departments, had become aware sooner of the harmful effects of an over-centralized operation.

This policy is sound. The Department must continue to gradually intensify its decentralization.

As already noted, there are some district directors and postmasters who are reluctant to assume certain delegated responsibilities and are inclined to shirk them by referring back to Headquarters for a decision. This is unfair to both the Department and the employees. We reiterate that there are far too many detailed problems of a purely regional or local nature which are referred to Headquarters.

There are, on the other hand, such fields as finance, personnel, supplies or equipment, etc., where decentralization is less advanced due to restrictions set by some control agencies which are themselves still highly centralized.

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<sup>1/</sup> See Chapter 4, "General Impressions".

They are, at the present time, studying their respective policies and are planning to delegate some of their authority within their own administrations.<sup>1/</sup>

In these areas, district directors and postmasters find themselves in a quandary: they are responsible for the efficient management of complex operations without having all the authority required to do the job properly. They have to contend with restrictions over which they have no control, e.g., expenditures for the repair or improvement of post offices or of certain types of equipment.

We hope that, with the emphasis on general decentralization and the setting up of an adequate grievance procedure, the appropriate authorities will ensure that regional and local managers, once informed in a more formal manner of problems of this nature, will have the authority to take corrective action on their own initiative.

The Department is aware of the difficulties and problems created by decentralization. It is trying to be more orderly and methodical in its delegation of authority. It is also establishing a better management reporting and audit system. However, as the attempts to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Government Organization on financial management have shown, the setting up of such a system requires time and effort. It requires special training of managers so that they will clearly understand their role in a decentralized administration and will make proper use of new techniques.

The Department is seeking a system which will allow every district director and every postmaster, within headquarters' objectives, to understand their

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<sup>1/</sup> We are referring here particularly to the Civil Service Commission, the Treasury Board, and the Department of Public Works.

duties and to utilize all administrative resources required to meet these objectives. Once this system is set up, field managers will be held accountable for the exercise of their authority through management audit reports.

We seriously considered recommending that greater, and particularly more realistic, financial responsibility be delegated to district directors and post-masters. We are not doing so at this time because the Department states that such delegation must be subject to the management reporting system which is now being developed.

WE RECOMMEND:

18. That the Department take early action to ensure that its field managers are fully conversant with the extent of their authority, duties and financial responsibilities.
19. That the Department consult with the staff organizations, either at the national or local level, to determine work areas where difficulties have been encountered due to insufficient delegated authority and that it take corrective measures accordingly.

## CHAPTER 8

### MANPOWER

Both the Department and the postal workers are concerned with the problems of maintaining a staff adequate in number and competence in post offices.

These different viewpoints are discussed in this chapter.

#### 1. Establishments and controls

(1) Postal employees from almost all parts of the country are of the opinion that the Department does not have enough full-time employees and that the personnel increase is not proportional to the increase in the volume of mail received, processed, dispatched and delivered. They complained that the number of supervisors in Staff Post Offices is inadequate.

The Department, without claiming that its control policy could not be improved, first wants to make its position quite clear. We think this is valid and summarize it so that it will not be judged too harshly.

The Department warns against those who are looking back several years and who make deductions and venture to make comparisons without first qualifying them sufficiently. For these people it underlines the following facts:

- a) Several methods and procedures have been adopted, since 1954, which save time in mail handling;
- b) more recently, it is making greater use of mechanical equipment which reduces the amount of handling of postal items and parcels;
- c) it has made staff changes to make better use of available manpower;
- d) patrons who constantly use postal services are more careful today in

preparing their mail, and thus save an appreciable amount of time for the administration and employees;

e) mail-processing time is dependent not only upon mail volume but also upon its composition.

Nevertheless, the Department admits the necessity of adopting a better procedure for maintaining its personnel at the level required by districts and local offices. It is working on such a project and expects that a new "management audit" system which is discussed further on in this chapter, will correct several of the present shortcomings if not all of them.

(2) The method used until now by the Department takes two factors into consideration: that of forecasting and that of actual needs which sometimes exceed the forecast.

a) Every year, in May, the Department fixes its staff requirements across the country for the following fiscal year (April 1 to March 31).

Each staff postmaster then attempts to make an estimate of the required manpower. This is not an easy task as anyone who has had to forecast a year in advance, events over which he has no control will know. In accordance with departmental directives, the postmaster evaluates the probable increase in the work load in his office and takes into consideration the personnel at his disposal.

Once these estimates have been studied and scrutinized by the district directors and reviewed by the Department, Treasury Board comes to a decision. Then, subject to Cabinet and Parliamentary approval, the Department knows the amount available for staffing. Afterwards a pool of unallocated positions are allocated to directors by the Department enabling them in basic postal classes to meet, to a certain extent, personnel requirements in the Staff Post Offices in their districts, during the year.

b) At the district levels there are monthly establishment reviews.

At the end of each month postmasters report to their district director on the number of part-time employees they hired and the amount of overtime performed by full-time employees. <sup>1/</sup> If all this information indicates the need for additional permanent employees the district director can submit an official <sup>2/</sup> requisition.

Headquarters reviews each requisition and analyses the statistical data and other pertinent information. If it considers the requisition justified, an increase in the personnel establishment is authorized.

c) Headquarters, on the other hand, makes frequent checks and audits by means of monthly budgetary reports from postmasters and district directors. <sup>3/</sup> Sometimes the Department submits supplementary estimates to Treasury Board following developments which could not have been foreseen at the time the main estimates were prepared.

The Department meets with some difficulties because as a rule, it is not given the authority to hire new employees simply because it "foresees" an increase in mail volume. The "actual" volume of mail handled and the revenue received are the main criteria used. We are under the impression that the Department, too often, must wait until the situation has settled definitely. However, we believe that it deserves to be granted more latitude!

The appropriate authorities must grant the Post Office Department a

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- 1/ In some localities the number of part-time employees seemed abnormally high and overtime out of proportion. This aspect is discussed further on in the Report.
- 2/ Under Directive ADPMG-PSB, No. 242, dated June 22, 1965, district directors may approve new positions in basic postal classes. The Department intends to extend this right as new criteria are established.
- 3/ The Department has set up a special unit whose main function under the direction of a senior officer is to be responsible for staffing problems.

special status and more flexibility in its administration if they wish to avoid a great many problems which will prove to be more and more serious with the recognition of collective agreements. It is essential that the Department be able to cope with personnel shortages at the local and district level, on very short notice, subject to reasonable post-audit controls.

(3) The setting-up of the new management audit system which is nearly completed will be a valuable help.

Through such a system the Department will be kept constantly posted on the work loads in each post office, and on the categories of manpower (full-time, part-time or casual) employed and on the overtime required. Thus, supervisors in the field operating services will know immediately if there is a need for additional personnel. As soon as this system has stood the test of time the Department intends to delegate to its representatives, its district directors and its postmasters in grades 17, 18, and 19, greater authority to meet with this requirement.

WE RECOMMEND:

20. That the appropriate authorities recognize the need for a special status for the Department with much greater flexibility so that it may at the local and district levels cope with any shortage in personnel on short notice, subject to a reasonable post-audit control.
21. That the Department put into operation the new management audit system as soon as possible, so that it may be better informed of its personnel requirements.
22. That once this system is found satisfactory the Department delegate to its district directors and its postmasters in grades 19, 18, and 17, wide powers so that they may be able to cope with the need for additional manpower.

## 2. Staffing and turnover

Employees think that the staff turnover rate in the Post Office Department is very high. They see this as an indication of general dissatisfaction and of unsatisfactory working conditions which are becoming less and less comparable to those found in industry.

The following tabulation shows the turnover of personnel for every fiscal year, from 1956-1957 to 1965-1966:

Year	Total Staff	Separations	Percentage
1956-1957	20,267	2,258	11.1
1957-1958	20,745	1,894	9.1
1958-1959	21,295	1,324	6.2
1959-1960	22,140	1,661	7.5
1960-1961	22,750	1,374	6.0
1961-1962	23,471	1,264	5.4
1962-1963	23,860	1,281	5.4
1963-1964	24,248	1,328	5.5
1964-1965	25,215	1,680	6.7
1965-1966	26,171	1,915	7.3

Source: Questionnaire received from the Post Office Department, May 6, 1966.

The average turnover of 6.7% for 1964-1965 and 7.3% for 1965-1966 does not seem excessive nor too alarming.  
1/

Several employees stated that 50% of the postal clerks and letter carriers have not yet reached the maximum of their salary, indicating a disproportionately high turnover. Statistics show that 5,656 letter carriers and postal clerks are in this category, or 33.4% of the total strength. If we take into account that the staff increased by 2,455 during the last five years, most of them being letter carriers and postal clerks, we cannot conclude that the turnover rate is generally high in these particular classes.

1/ The turnover rate in the Civil Service as a whole is 11%.

The problem, however, is acute in some regions as shown in this second table:

Location	Total Staff	Annual Turnover Rate	
		April 1964 to March 1965 per cent	January 1965 to May 1965 per cent
Quebec, P.Q.	565	3	10
Victoria, B.C.	284	7	10
Regina, Sask.	299	9	10
Ottawa, Ont.	922	9	10
Toronto, Ont.	3,771	9	11
Hamilton, Ont.	480	7	18
Burlington, Ont.	67	19	18
Downsview, Ont.	94	20	18
Don Mills, Ont.	88	15	19
St. Catharines, Ont.	108	11	20
Sarnia, Ont.	87	13	20
Sault-Ste-Marie, Ont.	79	15	21
Windsor, Ont.	284	8	22
Niagara Falls, Ont.	74	13	23
Oshawa, Ont.	99	28	27
Port Credit, Ont.	52	25	46
Oakville, Ont.	55	21	48

Source: Letter received from Mr. A. de Gaspé Taché, Assistant Director of Personnel, Canada Post Office, Ottawa, October 5, 1965.

These figures not only show an abnormal rate of turnover in these cities, but also indicate a noticeable increase in this rate the last few months indicated.

The reasons for this cannot be pinpointed definitely, but we suspect that employee turnover in the Post Office increases in those regions where wages are the highest and working conditions the best.

The Department must examine this problem. It could have costly repercussions and be the cause of a loss of valuable time in recruiting, training and productivity. Each employee resigning from the service should be interviewed in order to find the real reasons for his departure. Once this information has been obtained the Department will know exactly what the situation is and will then be able to concentrate on each local condition to overcome these difficulties. But it is obvious

that only wage increases and better working conditions will put an end to the high turnover rate in these areas.

The Department must adopt effective measures to minimize any delay in recruiting replacements as soon as vacancies occur. It has recently received approval from the Civil Service Commission to hold continuing competitions in those areas where recruiting is difficult, and the postmaster now has the authority to examine all sufficiently qualified candidates where an eligible list is not already in existence, and hire on the spot the successful candidates for full-time positions.

WE RECOMMEND:

23. That the Department interview each employee resigning from the postal service and determine the real reasons for his departure.
24. That the Department in areas where there is a high turnover rate use all means available to secure the necessary personnel.

3. Part-time employees

(1) The Department states that it employs in post offices a sufficient number of full-time employees to take care of the normal mail volume. But this volume is not always normal. There are "peak periods".

In most post offices these peak periods occur in late afternoon or early evening following street letter-box collections or the arrival of mail from surrounding smaller post offices, etc. The Department, and rightly so, wishes to process this mail so that it will be dispatched to its destination as quickly as possible. It hires part-time employees for three to five hours per day, often five days a week.

The Department claims it cannot do otherwise. To maintain a permanent staff the year round based on peak-hour needs would be a waste of manpower, time, and money. There is not enough mail to be handled immediately before and immediately

after these periods to keep the number of full-time employees, who would be needed to do this emergency work, busy for eight consecutive hours. The Department adds that if it were to make an exception to this policy, a greater number of full-time staff would be required for the night shift because mail which has to be processed in time for morning delivery reaches the post office only in the evening. At the moment, such a measure does not appear desirable to the Department from the simple point of view of normal postal service operation.

The Department claims that whenever possible it employs full-time rather than part-time employees.

To prevent any abuse the following orders have been issued:

a) Part-time employees may not take over from each other without a break.

In other words, there must not be any "continuing" or "back-to-back" part-time operations. The Department does not allow a part-time employee to work from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., and another to be assigned to similar work from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. In such a case the services of a full-time employee must be retained.

b) Two part-time employees may not be hired to work at different periods of the day or night if the total number of hours of these two employees are considered full-time, i.e., the equivalent of an eight hour shift.

c) A part-time employee may not be employed if there are eight hours of work to be done and there are eight hours available before the next operation.

These directives appear reasonable. However, that they are not taken into consideration in some post offices and, as in the case of the "so-called casual employees" which is discussed in the next section, we believe that a thorough check is needed, bearing in mind the importance of defining clearly the term "peak period", particularly in the processing of mail for local delivery.<sup>1/</sup>

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1/ There is one particular city where mail which was processed and sorted by a large number of part-time employees between 6 and 10 p.m. remained in the office until 4 a.m. the next day before being despatched to postal stations within that city for local delivery.

We do not wish to deprive part-time employees of an essential livelihood, but it is our responsibility to give our attention first of all to full-time employees.

If it is true, as alleged, that in some districts or localities part-time employees are granted special or illegitimate favours against departmental policy, we would be remiss not to call attention to it. If on the other hand our information is inaccurate, we shall be pleased to know.

Our recommendations do not go too far.

Over and above the annual survey on part-time help requirements, when budget and manpower estimates for each post office are prepared, the Department analyses these requirements as follows:

- a) every time a postmaster requests additional staff;
- b) whenever departmental records show that part-time employees frequently go beyond their normal authorized work period;
- c) every time it initiates a production control programme in an office;
- d) every time a complaint is received from the Union of Postal Workers or the Letter Carriers' Union.

The "detailed check" which we recommend is different from a routine inspection. It must be carried out thoroughly so that if our impression is correct the Department will be that much more enlightened.

Through its new monthly report system on post office establishments, which the Department intends to make available either to the local joint committees or to local branch representatives, full-time employees will be kept informed of the situation with regard to staff strength.

These monthly reports will also enable representatives to follow up more closely on those part-time employees who, under certain circumstances and to avoid overtime work by full-time personnel, are hired as casual help and paid as such.<sup>1/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> Such is the case when a large quantity of mail is received which must be processed to meet a deadline.

(2) Some postal clerks maintain that part-time employees are replacing them on day shifts, thereby compelling them to work on evening or night shifts.

The Department claims to be unaware of this situation. It does not condone such a practice, and if it exists on a continuing basis considers it contrary to its policy. It is ready to review each case brought to its attention and to discuss it with the staff organizations. The monthly reports on establishments will surely be of help in revealing and rectifying such irregularities.

(3) These same postal clerks request that part-timers not be authorized to replace them unless they have successfully passed examinations.

The Department does not believe that such a measure is necessary. Nevertheless it is looking into its feasibility and is considering the re-establishment of the part-time Postal Clerk 2 classification, and to require the holder of such a position to write the same examination as the full-time sorter.

In all fairness to part-time employees we must say that the Department, on the basis of reports received from senior operating officers, considers them efficient and conscientious.

(4) Postal workers complained that the Department does not make use of part-time help for week-end work.

The latter refers to an official complaint from the national directors of the Union of Postal Workers. This protest was the reason for issuing a ruling on April 27, 1965, prohibiting the hiring of part-time employees on Sunday in medium sized post offices. The Department did not apply this restriction to post offices in large centres because there is a real need for part-time help in those areas to help the full-time staff handle the work load, taking into consideration that these post offices operate on a slow-down production basis during the week-end.

These explanations are acceptable.

(5) We met a few groups of part-time employees who were members of the Civil Service Association of Canada. Representatives of a new group belonging to

the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Branch 976, comprised of casual employees from Montreal, Quebec City and surrounding areas, submitted a brief in February 1966, at Ottawa. The majority of these are female employees. The others are men who work as part-timers to increase their income.

Some of the problems mentioned by these employees are not very different from those raised by full-time employees. These problems are dealt with further on in the Report. But there are a few, however, which are peculiar to part-time employees:

- a) These people complain strongly that they suffer a loss in salary on their return from two (or more) months absence due to illness.

We hope that this problem will be resolved once the Bureau of Classification Revision of the Civil Service Commission has completed its study on position classification. It is hoped that every part-time employee will be paid according to the actual duties he performs on his return to work.

- b) Part-time helpers claim the same leave rights as full-time employees.

Civil Service Regulations make no provision for the granting of leave to part-time employees paid on an hourly basis except for vacation leave entitlement and paid statutory holidays.

There is no need at present to grant part-time employees the same sick or special leave recognized for full-time employees. We are of the opinion, however, that a reasonable allowance should be paid to them as is done for vacation leave.

- c) Part-time employees believe that short breaks in service should not affect payment of the 4% gratuity paid in lieu of vacation leave.

At present, if an employee is continually employed for 30 or more days during the year in which he was appointed or in the year during which he ceases to be employed in the postal service he is entitled to a cash gratuity equal

to 4% of the basic and overtime pay received during that period. In the case of re-employment he must once again be employed for 30 days before becoming eligible for vacation leave or for the 4% gratuity.

As short absences due to illness do not constitute a break in service it is best not to intervene.

d) Part-time employees criticized the lack of sufficient notice concerning their hours of work and shift changes. The Department claims that it has just as much right to decrease the number of working hours when the mail volume is less than had been forecast as it has to extend these hours when the opposite is true.

There should not be any major change in work shifts for part-timers unless there are, at the same time, changes made in the shifts for full-time employees. Part-time employees should then receive one month notice, if possible, as do full-time employees.

e) Sometimes, the production of part-time sorters is measured by means of a token which they themselves leave in their sorting trays. The supervisor counts these tokens when the employee has completed his tour of duty. In this way continuous production record can be maintained in each section and the work flow can be planned more effectively while checking on the progress made by the staff.

This is an excellent tool for the supervisor provided he uses it properly  
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and does not see it as a means to favour one employee in particular.

#### 4. Casual employees

The Civil Service Regulations authorize a deputy-head to appoint persons  
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to fulfil duties of a casual nature. It adds that, "except with the approval of

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1/ Recommendations concerning part-time employees appear in the next section.

2/ Section 88 (1).

the Commission, a casual employee shall not be employed for a period in excess of six months, but no person shall be employed as a casual employee for any period in excess of twelve months".  
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The Department is still taking advantage of these provisions. It employs an impressive number of casual workers. In its Personnel Manual 2/ it states that casual employees may be employed on a temporary basis in the following cases:

- a) to assist full-time staff in emergency situations;
- b) to replace regular staff on leave;
- c) to replace regular employees when there is no eligible list from which a continuous replacement might be assigned.

The Department has two main categories of casual workers: those who fill in for regular employees on annual, furlough, or sick leave, and those who are hired during peak periods. Such periods are considered emergency situations. The Department states it will not tolerate casual employees working on a continuing basis. In such cases it replaces them by full-time employees.

Protests have often been heard against too great a number of casual employees who work regularly and enjoy preferential treatment; no night work, free week-ends, etc. It was alleged that many of these employees are not replaced even after months and months of continuous full-time work and that their employment affects seniority rights, the choice of annual vacation time, and the obtention of more desirable working hours. Finally, it was stated that this

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1/ Section 88 (2).

2/ Volume 1 under "Casual Employees".

has a strong detrimental effect on the morale of the regular employees and that the employment of casuals is simply a means of obtaining cheap labour.

These protests particularly when referring to an excessive use of casual employees appear to be justified in some areas.

Several postmasters have respected neither the letter nor the intent of the Civil Service Regulations and the Personnel Manual. Rather than go through the lengthy and complex procedure of competitions and hire full-time employees they have used casual employees. Evidently, it is easier to recruit casual employees directly than it is to prove the need for full-time staff by means of different information and statistics and then having to wait for approval by either the district director or headquarters. Possibly these postmasters have found that it is easier to control the hiring of casual employees, to change their working hours at will, and, if need be, to lay them off.

It would be needless to conceal the fact that the hiring of casual employees and part-timers may give rise to favouritism or nepotism.

It is essential that the Department adopt a firm policy to the effect that the hiring of all casual, part-time, or any other employees not coming under the Civil Service Act, from now on, will be done through the National Employment Service. Such a practice is followed in other departments.

Although the Department cannot discontinue altogether the use of casual employees the problem caused by their continuing presence in too many offices has reached disturbing proportions. The Department has realized this. It has set to work already: in one of the largest post offices it has just increased, in an appreciable way, the number of full-time employees in order to reduce the number of casuals and avoid paying excessive overtime.

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1/ These employees, while working as letter carriers, earn \$2.02 an hour (which corresponds approximately to the hourly rate for letter carriers at the minimum of the class) and if they work as postal clerks, \$1.57 an hour (which represents less than the minimum of this class). Oshawa is an exception to this rule where because of recruiting problems wages are \$1.75 an hour.

It is important to clarify this whole situation.

WE RECOMMEND:

25. That the Department, with the co-operation of the local joint committees, make a survey of the number of part-time and casual employees on strength in each staff post office.
26. That detailed instructions be given to postmasters and to district directors to supply these committees with all information necessary for the preparation of these surveys and their study.
27. That the Department act immediately whenever these surveys indicate that neither the letter nor the intent of the Civil Service Regulations or of the Personnel Manual dealing with the hiring and retention of these employees are respected, and that they seek to replace them with full-time employees.
28. That in the future each postmaster in a staff post office display monthly reports on the number of part-time and casual employees in his office together with the number of hours during which they have worked.
29. That the Department, at the national joint committee level, attempt to come to an understanding with the staff organizations as to the meaning and extent of the words "peak period" and "emergency situation".
30. That the Department make constant checks on the utilization of part-time and casual employees in staff post offices to ensure that postmasters do not hire them to fill gaps in the permanent establishment.
31. That the Department develop a method to keep itself posted, as well as the district directors, on all cases of abuse in that field.
32. That the Department examine the possibility of resolving the above-mentioned problems by determining ahead of time the percentage of part-time employees who may be allowed to work in post offices in proportion to the total number of full-time employees assigned therein.
33. That, to ensure that the letter and intent of the Civil Service Regulations are respected regarding the possible review of the situation after six months of employment for casual employees, the Department be at all times in a position to determine the accumulated total of actual periods of casual employment.

34. That these statistics be made available to the Civil Service Commission to enable it, if need be, to decide if it should extend the use of the services of casual workers who have reached the normal six months of employment.
35. That, in the future, all recruiting and hiring of part-time and casual employees be done through the National Employment Service.
36. That the Department institute without delay a monthly report system on its staff strength and that these reports be made available to local joint committees.
37. That part-time employees be granted an equitable allowance for sick or special leave with pay under the same conditions as are applicable to full-time employees.

We cannot understand why the Department pays its casual workers, who have the experience required and who are regular replacements for postal clerks on leave, at an hourly rate less than the minimum of the initial salary for this group. Furthermore, we fail to see why this is also the case for casual employees who are regularly called back for recurring emergency situations.

It is beyond our terms of reference to recommend that these rates be adjusted upwards. We sow the seed, however, not only because we believe in the principle of equal pay for equal work but also because we feel that such an adjustment would help prevent further abuse.

#### 5. Christmas help

During the Christmas period there is always a heavy increase in the volume of mail. To dispose of this mail the Department hires a large number of extra personnel referred to as "Christmas Help".<sup>2/</sup> Christmas helpers assist with either

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- 1/ Section 2 (m) (v) of Bill C-170 (Public Staff Relations Act) does not consider as a public service employee "a person employed on a casual or temporary basis, unless he has been so employed for a period of six months or more".
- 2/ Appointments and certain conditions of employment are governed by the Civil Service Act and Regulations.

sorting duties or delivery of mail and go out with the carriers delivering mail.

(1) The staff organizations maintain that this help should be hired earlier and in larger numbers. The letter carriers insisted that they should have one full-time helper available from the first week of December who should be retained until the backlog of accumulated mail has been delivered.

The Department does not set a fixed date for the hiring of Christmas help. The decision in this matter is left to the district directors and individual postmasters who hire on the basis of local and district needs. In the Montreal Post Office some Christmas helpers may be hired in the last days of November for dispatching mail to foreign countries or to other distant centres throughout Canada. Helpers for city delivery are hired at a later date. In a number of other large post offices, Christmas help is not hired sometimes until the beginning of December.

The Department submits that normally a letter carrier does not need a helper prior to December 12, because the volume of mail has not reached such proportions that it cannot be delivered without extra help. However, should there be a noticeable increase prior to that date, individual postmasters have the required authority to hire helpers immediately.

In several offices the postmasters consult with the representatives of local branches prior to fixing the hiring dates for Christmas help. We approve of this policy. This is an excellent means of avoiding discontentment.

(2) Some letter carriers suggested that helpers should refrain from sorting mail and be used only to deliver mail. The Department believes it is preferable to have the letter carriers do part of the delivery and to supervise their Christmas helpers on the street because it keeps complaints concerning misdelivery to a minimum because patrons apparently become apprehensive about the

proper delivery of mail if they do not see the regular letter carrier on the street. If this is so, it is necessary to have Christmas helpers assist in the sorting of mail so that the regular carrier will be available for street delivery.

(3) It was suggested that Christmas helpers were not subject to the same disciplinary measures as full-time employees. Obviously the same measures cannot apply. However, these helpers are released if they do not perform their duties to the satisfaction of the postmaster or legal action taken if warranted.

WE RECOMMEND:

38. That the Department continue to make a close study each year of the need to extend the period during which Christmas helpers are required, taking into account more particularly any large increases in the volume of mail in recent years.
39. That wherever possible postmasters consult with local joint committees before fixing the hiring dates for Christmas help and before making changes required during this period.
40. That postmasters be less hesitant to use their authority to assign sufficient Christmas help to clerical staff and letter carriers as soon as required.
41. That neither the postal clerks nor the letter carriers be held responsible for infractions or errors committed by Christmas helpers over whom no adequate control is possible.

6. Special manning problems

(1) We heard criticisms against the presence of close relatives in the same post office. Such a situation evidently gives rise to numerous problems including the upholding of and the respect for authority, and insinuations of favouritism and nepotism are not among the least.

The Department deeply regrets such abuses. It tries to stop them as soon as it becomes aware of them but it does not want to refuse employment categorically every time it happens that an employee comes under the supervision of a

1/  
close relative. It points out that neither the Civil Service Act nor the Regulations prohibit the appointment of near relatives in the same Civil Service unit, provided that these appointees have the necessary qualifications.

The Department should not allow this type of situation to arise in areas under its jurisdiction.

We believe that it will be above suspicion if it agrees with our recommendation to recruit its part-time or casual employees through the National Employment Service.

(2) It was said that the Department has employed too many female employees. These employees constitute only about two per cent of the full-time staff. The Department does not have full liberty of action in this matter. The Civil Service Act and Regulations give equal rights to men and women and the latter are not excluded from any competition provided they fulfil the conditions stipulated in the competition posters and that they possess the physical strength required.

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1/ The Commission asked the Department to provide a list of the post offices where postmasters or supervisors have close relatives under them. We did not receive such a list because the Department does not have any up-to-date statistics on this matter.

## CHAPTER 9

### CLASSIFICATION OF POSITIONS

(1) Post Office employees consider that their duties are not clearly defined. They want a more precise and more detailed description. They believe that not only would this indicate the need for pay adjustments but also would prevent some postmasters from assigning them tasks unrelated to their normal duties.

Our Commission agreed to discuss these problems while admitting that they affect pay rates. In this matter we have followed the principle accepted by the Bureau of Classification Revision of the Civil Service Commission which is now assessing the duties of each position in the Civil Service and creating new classification groups without looking at the salary rates.

One basic problem for postal employees is the fact that there is no real direct and clearly acceptable comparison between their jobs and those in the private sector. Some parallel might possibly be drawn between specific tasks, i.e., between one or more parts of the postal employees' job and one or more parts of a job in the private sector. There are no jobs on the outside with an identical range of duties.

It is one thing to compare the postal employee with the bank messenger, the warehouseman, the delivery man, the meter reader, the collector, the employees of the direct mail order services, or of the distribution agencies and manufacturing services, it is another to find a complete similarity of the full scope of duties.

However, if we look at certain more or less abstract factors to

evaluate the satisfactory performance of certain duties, it is possible to compare certain requirements such as education, training, responsibility, integrity, degree of supervision, initiative, mental and physical effort, risks of accidents, hours of work, shift schedules, the aptitude at times to adapt oneself to different working conditions (e.g., weather conditions), and finally, contacts with the general public, diplomacy and tact.

By allocating points to each one of these factors in relation to its importance to the total job requirements, we can find an acceptable basis for comparison, and facilitate job evaluation at each level and between classes.

We know that the Bureau of Classification Revision is considering the adoption of a point rating scale for postal positions. We hope that this method will lead to a better understanding by all concerned of the scope of their duties and responsibilities. These point rating scales will certainly enable the staff organizations to understand the basis of comparison with outside jobs and between the various classes within the postal service.

We can only suggest that the Bureau of Classification Revision and the Department consult with the staff organizations at the earliest possible date so that they can take advantage of their comments and suggestions.

WE RECOMMEND:

42. That a point rating scale be used for the classification of all non-supervisory operating positions in the Post Office.
43. That the staff organizations be consulted, as soon as possible, by the Department and the Bureau of Classification Revision of the Civil Service Commission in the revision of the postal employee classes at each step in the revision process.

(2) We should consider three particular problems which must be resolved very soon.

a) It now takes seven years for a postal clerk to reach the maximum of his class, five years for a letter carrier, a mail handler and a postal chauffeur, and four for a dispatcher and a railway mail clerk.

These time limits are not too realistic.

We are convinced that postal workers, in general, acquire their maximum knowledge and productivity requirements in a shorter time.

WE RECOMMEND:

44. That postal employees reach the maximum of their salary in three years.

b) The immediate integration into one class of the postal clerks 1 and 2 cannot be postponed any longer even though a point rating scale will eventually be developed and accepted.

The postal clerks 1 perform a variety of duties in smaller post offices, whereas the postal clerks 2 tend to specialize and perform, day in and day out, similar but less varied types of duties in larger post offices with a higher volume of production. These postal clerks 1 have a need, most of the time, for a greater range of knowledge than a postal clerk 2. He also regularly assumes a wider scope of responsibilities in his daily tasks. And yet, a postal clerk 1 is paid less than a postal clerk 2.

This is a serious anomaly created by the simplification of the present system of classification of postal clerks which apparently does not take into account the great variety of duties which postal clerks 1 have to perform.

WE RECOMMEND:

45. That postal clerks 1 and 2 be immediately integrated into one and the same class, pending the acceptance of an appropriate point rating scale for both classes.

c) Several branch representatives wanted to omit from the statement of duties the well known phrase "other duties as required". It should be noted that the word "related" is not always used. Some employees, while admitting that these were exceptional cases, have asserted that in some offices this wording had been invoked to have them clean floors, wash windows or serve as maintenance men.

The Department must make every effort to provide in position descriptions detailed information reflecting as accurately as possible the essential duties and qualifications required. It should, moreover, make a general reference to certain duties which the employee may incidentally be called upon to perform. It is better to give more details rather than less in the outline of duties.

WE RECOMMEND:

46. That the words "other related duties" be used in job descriptions for the Post Office and that mention also be made of all the duties which are recognized as forming part of the regular duties of the employees even if these duties are not considered part of the normal daily duties.

(3) At some localities it was recommended that supervisory letter carriers be grouped in three distinct classes:

- a) block rotation supervisory letter carriers;
- b) holiday relief supervisory letter carriers;
- c) sick relief supervisory letter carriers.

Employees contend that the last two classes require greater knowledge, responsibility, and versatility and that they should receive a higher remuneration than the block supervisory letter carrier.

Strangely enough this proposal did not seem to be acceptable to a good many as our inquiry progressed. We prefer not to comment on its merit. We hope that the point rating system will determine if there is enough difference to justify the establishment of three distinct classification levels.

(4) Some clerks suggested that a special allowance be paid to those who have sorting knowledge of more than one geographical zone.

We shall not insist on this point since it may well be that this knowledge requirement might disappear after the adoption of the proposed departmental policy for proficiency examinations.<sup>1/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> See Chapter 14, "Proficiency Examinations".

## CHAPTER 10

### THE WORK WEEK

The field operating services of the Post Office are a year round, 24 hours a day, and seven days a week operation, thus giving rise to different problems mentioned by employees and which concern hours of work, shift schedules, week-end work, overtime in general, meal hours, etc.

#### 1. Hours of work and shift schedules

(1) The Deputy Postmaster General has the authority, with the approval of the Civil Service Commission within certain reservations, to fix employees'  
<sup>1/</sup> hours of work and spread them on a weekly basis.

Postal clerks and letter carriers work a 40-hour week.  
<sup>2/</sup> Because of the many requirements of the postal service, the Department requires employees to work during the day or partly during the day and evening or at night. For these reasons it is difficult to spread 40 hours over five consecutive working days. Some employees such as letter carriers and wicket clerks do not work on Sundays but their second day off during the week is not always a Saturday or a Monday. Other employees working on Saturdays or Sundays, or both, do not have consecutive days off between Monday and Friday.

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<sup>1/</sup> Civil Service Act, section 68 (e); Civil Service Regulations, sections 9 to 11.

<sup>2/</sup> Railway mail clerks have their own schedule of working hours which we discuss in Chapter 37, section 1.

However, the Department claims that, as far as possible, it gives its employees two consecutive days of rest each week and even three days when there is an interval of six to ten working days between days off. It makes every effort to reduce staff on week-ends and to use a rotation system so that the great majority of employees can have Saturdays and Sundays free.

The number of shifts varies between offices. There may be eight to ten, each with a different schedule. The Department claims that, as much as it would like to, it cannot spread the work any differently and thus avoid abnormal working hours for a good number of employees. In many cases it states it has no choice. It must take into consideration the times of arrival and departure of the mail. However, it has no control over some of them. The Department does not control the timetables of airplaines, boats and trains. As for highway services the Department must consider the large distances to be travelled and the stops which are required. Decisions are also affected by public transport timetables. The Department is convinced that the postal service could not be as rapid or efficient if it adopted the suggestion of many employees that there should be only three shifts in each post office with regular schedules.

Headquarters was asked about the possibility, in some localities at least, of changing the arrival times of the highway services to coincide with the starting time of the first day shift.

We were told that the highway services had been instituted bearing in mind the speeding up of the delivery of mail to the public. As the letter carriers' tour of duty begins at 8.00 or 8.30 a.m., the mail must reach them in time to be handled and sorted by walks before they leave. If the arrival time of the highway services were to coincide with that of the day shifts serious delays would result.

The fixing of working hours and the composition of shifts and their schedules create enormous problems for the Post Office Department. We feel, however,

that the Department has, to some extent, lost sight of the human side of the problem and wonder if it has considered sufficiently the effects of constant evening or night work on the family and social life of an employee.

One rather curious fact is that most industries and the Government pay higher differentials for night work (from 12 midnight to 8 a.m.) while, in fact, the evening shift (4 p.m. to midnight) upsets the normal life of a worker to a greater degree. His absence from home from late afternoon to about midnight cuts him off from his wife and family at a time when his presence is almost essential. This shift work prevents him from taking advantage of the moments when home life is at its fullest and, often, most agreeable. It leaves him no time except during holidays, to relax, to see friends, or take part in outside activities of any kind.

We do not claim to have found an ideal solution. Again reference is made to the formula we have already recommended: in each staff post office, a detailed examination of the hours of work and shift schedules should be started through the local joint committees, as soon as possible.

This on the spot examination will logically lead to the analysis of different suggestions which we have not studied because of the lack of time. Offhand, many of them seemed to have interesting possibilities. Here are some examples:

- a) a change in some highway services schedules;
- b) the adoption of a shift rotation policy with intervals so spaced (two months, perhaps) to allow an employee to adapt to changes in his daily life;
- c) an alteration of present shift schedules;
- d) the elimination of evening work, the establishment of schedules from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., from noon to 8 p.m., and if necessary, from midnight to 8 a.m., part-time employees being called to deal with any overflow of work in the evenings;

e) a new "days off" policy allowing the employee, if he so wishes, to take only one day off a week for a certain time and accumulate the other day off and thus be able to take four, five or six consecutive days of rest from time to time.

The local joint committees, with the co-operation of the Department, district directors and postmasters, will surely discover acceptable ways and means of assigning hours of work which, without being a detriment to the postal service, will not disregard the welfare of the employees.

(2) As a long-term solution the Department, deriving benefit from all the suggestions and recommendations received from the local joint committees, will have to undertake a thorough study of the work flow in the post office from the beginning to the end of daily operations.

To achieve the desired results this study should not be limited to the single problem of the distribution of working hours and shift schedules. It should cover problems of handling different classes of mail, priorities, transportation, etc.

We see the need for the services of outside consultants to carry out such a study. We also see the necessity for the prior acceptance of three main basic principles while not losing sight of the interests of the postal service:

- a) most of the work must be done during normal working hours by shifts with regular schedules and full-time staff;
- b) night work, and especially evening work, must be reduced as much as possible;
- c) week-end work must be eliminated or reduced to a minimum wherever it is not essential.

(3) Some other points were raised.

a) While admitting that civil servants in the field operating services of other departments also have a 40-hour week some postal clerks recommended the adoption of a  $37\frac{1}{2}$ -hour week. In their view their work and that of clerical workers is not so different as to justify such a distinction.

With the exception of the wicket clerks, most of the work performed by a postal clerk does not appear to us to be of a clerical nature. Their duties more closely resemble those of an industrial employee. As the national leaders of the Union of Postal Workers did not make any such suggestion in their brief, we prefer not to intervene but to leave it to those concerned - if they see fit - to raise this point at the forthcoming collective bargaining negotiations.

b) Some employees referred to the system of broken days in shift schedules which means they have to work two half days during the week to make up their 40-hour week.

The Department uses this system in localities where the post office closes down on one-half day a week on the same days as the shops and businesses in the area are closed. As far as possible, it tries to spread the tour of duty over two weeks, one of 44 hours and the other of 36. We suggest that employees, in centres where hours are not so scheduled, study the feasibility of such a system and to request that it be adopted if they think it advisable. There is no reason to believe that the Department will have any objection.

c) In a few post offices employees are assigned to shifts varying between day, evening and night during a period of five to ten days.

We do not support this practice even if it is unusual and even if the Department, in these cases, gives an employee at least 8 hours rest before resuming work.

- d) The Department admits that, at times, some employees do not have 8 hours rest before being recalled to work. We disapprove of this practice also.
- e) On different occasions and on less than twenty-four hours notice the Department changes the employees' rotation days off after the shift schedules have been posted. This is done, it says, only in special circumstances; for example, in the case of the sudden and unforeseeable absence of an employee belonging to a small shift. The Department cannot always replace the latter by a casual and must at once recall the employee from his day off; in the case of railway mail clerks where the nature of the work makes it impossible to hire a casual employee, the Department has no alternative but to recall immediately a railway mail clerk on his day off so that he can be available before train departure time.
- f) The employees urge that they be authorized to leave work at 10.30 p.m., at the latest, on Christmas and New Year's Eve. They also suggest that all inside postal operations be stopped on these two holidays.

According to the Department it does all it can to let its employees go as early as possible on Christmas and New Year's Eve and that on these two days it requires only the attendance of a very minimum number of employees. It emphasizes, however, that in some areas December 26 and January 2 are normal delivery days and therefore it cannot reduce its staff too much.

The Department ought to do more. It is not impossible to make, beforehand, the necessary arrangements so that all staff can be released at 10.30 p.m. at the very latest on Christmas and New Year's Eve. Often at the risk of giving a less complete service in these areas it can limit itself to a very minimum number of employees on these two days. The patrons in these regions will understand.

WE RECOMMEND:

47. That local joint committees in each staff post office be authorized to start as soon as possible a detailed examination of working hours and shift schedules, to study all the possibilities for improvement and to make the recommendations having due regard to the requirements of the postal service.
48. That the Department, on the other hand, make a thorough study of the flow of work from the beginning to the end of daily operations.
49. That, for this purpose, the Department call on the services of outside consultants and recognize the validity of the basic guiding principles set out in this Report.
50. That hours of work be fixed as much as possible to coincide with the normal operation of public transportation.
51. That the Department make an effort to discontinue broken days in shift schedules as well as the assignment of employees to different shifts over short periods.
52. That employees be allowed a minimum of 8 hours rest, plus travel time, between each shift change.
53. That no member of the staff be obliged to work after 10.30 p.m., at the latest, on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.
54. That the Department reduce to a strict minimum the number of employees required to work on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

2. Week-end work

Employees stated that scheduling of work over a five-day week, Monday to Friday, with a few exceptions, would solve many problems, particularly in grades 14 to 19 post offices.<sup>1/</sup>

According to employees week-end work over an extended period has a depressing and adverse effect upon their individual, family and social life, is most detrimental to the recruiting of desirable and qualified personnel and is one of the reasons for the high rate of personnel turnover in many cities.

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<sup>1/</sup> See Appendix F.

As expected, they compared their lot with most public servants who are not required to work on week-ends. They emphasized that most businesses and all chartered banks now close on Saturdays, as well as a large number of provincial and municipal services.

Letter carriers do not believe that patrons are that concerned about receiving mail on Saturdays and a good number of wicket clerks think that no one has nor can have any serious objection to closing post offices on Saturday by noon at the latest. Finally, postal workers recommend the setting up of special week-end shifts composed of a very minimum number of employees who would process first class mail only.

The Department admits that these suggestions from its employees would make working conditions more normal and attractive but it does not believe that they are either practical or acceptable.

- a) The Department fears, as a foregone conclusion, a strong adverse reaction from the public.

It quotes, as a precedent, the protests caused a few years ago by its decision to curtail postal service on statutory holidays. One must admit that this reaction was shortlived, as was the case when mail delivery was reduced from two to one delivery per day.

It emphasizes that in many cases, mail items such as registered mail, postage due mail or C.O.D.'s, whose delivery requires personal contact according to the regulations, can only be delivered on Saturdays because it is the only day when the patron is at home.

The Department admits that it is the practice for a good many firms to close on Saturdays, but it does not consider this is practised to the extent that it could allow the Department to ignore its obligations towards all those businesses, whether small, medium or large, which remain open on that

day and which depend upon the maintenance of postal service at least on Saturday mornings.

b) The Department maintains that it cannot process first class mail only on week-ends.

This is a thorny problem because indirectly it brings another one concerning methods used sometimes by some postmasters during the week for the handling of third and fourth class mail. These methods have been questioned several times by the employees who believe that the Department, if it processed these two classes of mail as they are received during the week, would avoid its accumulation for the week-end. The Department denies using such methods and rejects the employees' allegation.

c) The Department also believes that a noticeable reduction of service on Saturdays would result in patrons seeking other means of communication, such as telephone, Telex or express services, resulting in a loss of revenue which would not compensate for the savings made because of the curtailment of service on Saturday.

Some conclusions can be drawn from these opposing points of view.

(1) Basically we are concerned here with a right of management.

The Department has the responsibility for all final decisions respecting the scheduling of work, the assignment of duties and the setting up of week-end work schedules. Everything considered, it is up to the Department to adopt the most reasonable measures. It is possible that employees do not see these measures in the same light and that they choose to contest their validity and timeliness. But, in the absence of the Department's concurrence in the viewpoint of its employees, we believe that the employer should have the last word and that he must be able to rely on the co-operation of its personnel.

(2) On the other hand, once these measures are applied, employees who are

called upon to work either on Saturdays or on Sundays should receive additional remuneration to compensate them adequately.

(3) Notwithstanding the above, the proposals put forward by the employees deserve a more thorough study than circumstances allowed us to do.

WE RECOMMEND:

55. That postal employees, subject to their right to put forward their points of view and discuss the pros and cons with the Department, should recognize that it is justified in organizing work on week-ends as it sees fit.
56. That the appropriate authorities, on the other hand, agree to pay additional remuneration to all employees required to work on week-ends even if this work is part of their normal scheduled weekly hours.
57. That the rate of such additional remuneration be negotiated under the proposed collective bargaining negotiations.
58. That the responsible authorities conduct a thorough study of the consequences of the adoption of a policy aimed at curtailing postal service on week-ends.
59. That this study include amongst other things:
  - a) the possibility of cancelling all letter carrier delivery on Saturdays to private homes, and limiting this service to the bare minimum on that day to businesses and commercial establishments;
  - b) the possibility of closing down wicket service on Saturday afternoons and of closing it down completely in those areas where operating costs consistently exceed revenue;
  - c) the possibility of suspending postal operations between the midnight shift on Friday and the evening shift on Sunday at those locations where this is practical, i.e., where no serious delay in mail delivery would occur;
  - d) the possibility in those offices where it would not be practical to curtail Saturday delivery and wicket service, of employing a minimum staff for the sale of money orders, etc., sorting, preparation and delivery of only first class mail matter along with C.O.D.'s and registered mail and the dispatching of mail of these classes.

### 3. Overtime in general

The Department pays its employees extra remuneration for "authorized" overtime.<sup>1/</sup> Usually extra pay is calculated on the following basis:

- a) for overtime beyond normal daily or weekly hours - time and a half;
- b) for work on a statutory holiday which falls on a normal working day - normal day's pay, plus time and a half for every hour worked on that day;
- c) for work on a statutory holiday falling on an employee's day of rest - three times his hourly rate for every hour.

The formula for "authorized" overtime as the Department applies it seems consistent with that of industry in general where each hour of overtime brings compensation in the form of extra pay.

(1) There is almost complete lack of agreement among employees on this subject. Some of them disagreed with the way overtime is allotted while others objected to being forced to work overtime.

The Department first of all asks for volunteers. If not enough volunteers are available a choice is made on the basis of the reverse order of seniority. It states that no employee with a valid excuse is made to work overtime and that disciplinary measures are never taken against anyone who refuses to do so.

This practice seems fair and we cannot understand why it should give rise to serious difficulties. The Department said it hopes that the staff organizations will, as soon as possible, state their own respective positions with regards to the allocation of overtime among employees, bearing in mind the operational requirements of the service.

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<sup>1/</sup> We are commenting here only on the general practice. In Chapters 33 and 37 we deal with the problem of overtime for letter carriers and railway mail clerks respectively.

(2) Employees ask that they be given at least four hours notice before being requested to work overtime. The Department has no objection but points out that this is not always possible, for example, when there is an unforeseeable delay in the arrival of the mail.

(3) Some consider that the Department should guarantee a minimum of three hours work every time they are called to work overtime. The Department claims that, to its knowledge, no employee is required to work overtime for less than two hours. It intends to notify postmasters to abide by this policy.

There must be a misunderstanding. There is a difference between overtime worked immediately after normal working hours and overtime which requires an employee to return to work after he has left.

In the latter case, we agree with the employees' request. If they are asked, unexpectedly, to leave their homes and return to the office to work overtime, we believe that a minimum of three hours pay is justified.

(4) Four other points need clarification.

a) Some employees complained that the 30 minutes worked every day prior to the official starting time during the Christmas period is not counted as overtime. The Department states that postmasters must count this as overtime.

b) It was suggested that new employees during their probationary period should be paid for overtime like other employees. This proposal is reasonable. The Department, however, maintains that it usually does not require these employees to work overtime.

c) Another point for discussion is the departmental policy of not asking part-time and casual employees to work overtime. The Department claims this is not its policy. It maintains that it does call on these employees to work overtime when necessary. However, it does not want to see female part-time employees work after midnight. We agree.

d) We understand that payment for overtime which at times was delayed is now made, normally, not later than the fifteenth day of the following month. Therefore we need not pursue this matter further.

WE RECOMMEND:

60. That the Department and the staff organizations, through the national joint committees, clarify the methods and procedures to be followed in the granting of overtime and its sharing among employees.
61. That a minimum of three hours overtime be guaranteed to any employee who, having already worked his normal shift, is asked to return to work after he has left the office.
62. That part-time, casual and new employees on probation be paid overtime for each hour they are required to work beyond their normal working day.

4. Meal hours

All employees of the Post Office are entitled to a meal break of at least half an hour during their daily eight hours of work.

(1) Several maintain that the meal break is not long enough and that sometimes they have had to eat while working because of pressure of work or inadequate transportation facilities.

Headquarters do not appear to be aware of these grievances and state that, in line with directives issued, postmasters have the responsibility to ensure that employees have a completely free half hour for their meals.

We must say that during our visits we actually saw employees eating while they were working. Of course, they may be many reasons for this, not all of which are necessarily the fault of the postmasters.

However, we believe that the Department should clarify its directives or make them more definite and make sure through the postmasters that they are fully understood and adhered to by immediate supervisors. Employees, on the other hand,

must remember that they have a right to stop all work during their meal break. If they are prevented from doing so, against their will, they should take the means at their disposal to obtain recognition of this right.

(2) There have been several other observations made about the meal break, one of which seems to deserve special comment. Employees complained about the time set for the meal break.

The Department usually tries to schedule the break between three and a half and to four and a half hours after the employee arrives at work. This is not always possible. For example, it is the practice for letter carriers to deliver about two-thirds of the daily volume of mail on the morning run. However, quite often, either the letter carrier has so much mail that it takes him longer to deliver it or there is no public transportation when he is ready to return to the office at noon. Evidently, some letter carriers are unable to have their meal until five or six hours after they start work.

There appears to be only one corrective measure. Although we do not believe that the majority of letter carriers will agree we think it is worth mentioning. Some suggested stopping delivery at a set time in the morning. This would mean that letter carriers would eat their meal at more convenient hours but it would probably mean that they run the risk of finishing work much later in the afternoon.

There are other post office employees who have to wait more than four and a half hours before eating their meals.

The Department reduces inconvenience to a minimum by staggering breaks to the best of its ability. It does not see how it can adopt a fixed rule to solve this problem which differs in every office. It states that changes made are not put into effect until the representatives of local branches have been consulted. This last statement offers interesting possibilities. We will return to it in our recommendations.

(3) It was suggested that the half hour lunch break be included in the normal hours of work.

Such an arrangement would be tantamount to introducing a  $37\frac{1}{2}$ -hour work week. According to the Department, this would cost the public several million dollars a year since a large number of additional workers would have to be engaged. We believe that this question should properly be held over until the forthcoming collective bargaining negotiations take place.<sup>1/</sup>

(4) A fourth proposal is that the half-hour lunch break should be extended to one hour.

The Department has no serious objections. Even now it allows some groups of employees a break of one hour. However, it did not fail to point out that some other groups would gain no real advantage from this proposal or might even lose by it. Therefore, if the lunch break were extended a good number of letter carriers would have their working day extended by half an hour. Postal clerks on evening shifts would perhaps have difficulty in finding public transportation if they left the office half an hour later. Evidently, some of them would lose part of their night differential pay.

This prospect makes us cautious and we believe it is preferable to let the employees themselves decide the merit of this proposal, having regard to local conditions, and if they see it as an improvement discuss the matter with the Department.

(5) The suggestion that the lunch break be abolished in lieu of extra pay is rejected.

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<sup>1/</sup> All federal employees attached to operating services work a 40-hour week. Only those in the administrative services work  $37\frac{1}{2}$  hours.

We cannot see this proposal at all. It is inhuman and antisocial to allow an employee to do a day's work without proper food or rest. The Department reacted in the same manner.

(6) Meal breaks present two other problems.

The first concerns only the letter carriers.

Although the Department has advised us of its intention to eliminate all "straight through" walks, it is always possible that the carrying out of this decision may be delayed. We are concerned about the letter carriers who have this type of walk and who cannot find a suitable place to eat their lunch. We are making a recommendation which should resolve this problem.

We are also making a recommendation regarding the second problem, which concerns mainly postal clerks who lose valuable time by having to punch the clock before and after their lunch break, either because of the large number of employees waiting in turn or because of the distance they must travel to reach the time clock.

WE RECOMMEND:

63. That the Department clarify its directives concerning its employees' right to a meal break of at least one full half hour during their eight hour day.
64. That the Department, through its postmasters, ensure that employees' immediate supervisors understand and conform to these directives.
65. That employees deprived of a meal break against their will take advantage of all avenues of redress open to them.
66. That the meal break be as near halfway through the working day as possible.
67. That any change affecting an employee's meal period be put into effect only after consultation with him and, if agreement cannot be reached, with representatives from his local branch.
68. That through local joint committees discussions be initiated to decide locally whether the lunch break should be one hour instead of half an hour.

69. That, from now until all "straight through" walks are eliminated, the Department ensure that letter carriers assigned to these walks have a suitable place to eat lunch and, if such a place is not available, that it take all the necessary measures to solve the problem including transportation of letter carriers by taxi if necessary.

70. That the Department after consultation with the local joint committees install more time clocks wherever deemed essential.

##### 5. Coffee breaks

Many aspects of coffee breaks were discussed.

(1) The Department was criticized for considering coffee breaks merely a privilege rather than a right. The rest period, commonly referred to as a coffee break, has become such a part of our way of life that it has all the characteristics of a right, the use of which if not abused, benefits both the employer and the employee.

It is preferable to give it formal recognition and avoid the possibility of frustrating grievances.

##### WE RECOMMEND:

71. That coffee breaks be recognized as a right rather than just a privilege.

(2) Employees requested that coffee breaks be extended from 10 to 15 minutes, contrary to the general practice in the private sector.

Even if employees, in some post offices work some distance from facilities where coffee, tea, beverages and food are dispensed, we do not concur with the above suggestion.  
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1/ Chapter 24, section 5, "Environmental and Physical Working Conditions", where we comment on the need for additional amenities.

WE RECOMMEND:

72. That, until further notice, coffee breaks remain limited to ten minutes but that the Department ensure that all employees can derive benefit from it.

It was said that in some post offices coffee breaks are given at poorly selected times. The operational requirements of the postal service evidently have a bearing on the timing of coffee breaks.

WE RECOMMEND:

73. That, as far as possible, coffee breaks be taken near the middle of each half shift, whether it be day, evening or night.

6. Wash-up time

At some localities, postal employees requested that the Department allow them during normal working hours a period of five to ten minutes to clean up before meals and before leaving the office.

We have observed that these employees are exposed to dust and that they often handle mail bags that are not altogether too clean.

The Department does not deny it and simply points out that this will be a matter for collective bargaining in due course. We agree but think that the Department should be willing to discuss this problem immediately with the staff organizations to arrive at a mutual understanding, especially where washrooms need a good deal of improvement regarding size, space, location and number.

WE RECOMMEND:

74. That the appropriate authorities recognize, in principle, that some post office employees are entitled to five minutes wash-up time before meals and before leaving the office.

75. That the Department discuss relevant controls with the staff organizations, through national joint committees.

76. That once a firm rule is established, Headquarters refer any decision of a local nature to postmasters and district directors.

## CHAPTER 11

### PAY AND ALLOWANCES

#### 1. Pay cheques

(1) The employees' main grievance relates to the number of pay periods in a year.

There are now 24 pay days per year. Postal employees, like all civil servants, receive their pay cheques near the middle and the end of each month.

This method of payment has some serious disadvantages, especially for lower paid workers whose budget is tight and committed ahead of time. Reference was made to the problem facing an employee who has to go through three week-ends between pay days and it was suggested that salaries be paid every two weeks.

We realize that Treasury Board not the Department has jurisdiction in this matter. We are aware that the Board has for some time been studying the possibility of such a change.

This change creates technical and administrative difficulties which become more serious when one considers that Treasury Board is, and quite rightly so, considering the change for the whole of the Civil Service. These difficulties are not insurmountable and must give way to the common good of all employees.

#### WE RECOMMEND:

77. That, from now on, postal employees receive their annual salary every two weeks, in 26 fixed periods per year,  
instead of 24.

(2) It was also requested that if Treasury Board decided to agree to

the necessary change, the Department would make every effort to issue these cheques every second Thursday at the latest, because a good number of employees who work late in the evening could have difficulty cashing their cheques if received on Friday.

We support this request.

(3) It was alleged that pay cheque stubs did not provide enough information. They referred to annotations for overtime and night differential pay which leave employees uninformed as to the exact period of work covered by these pay cheques.

We are assured by the Department that recent procedural changes have resolved this problem. If, despite these changes, some employees are still confused they should obtain the necessary explanations from their personnel office - this is one of its functions.

(4) Many employees would like to receive their pay cheques in advance when they go on vacation leave.

We are told there are difficulties to overcome. Because computers are used for the preparation of pay cheques, the employees' request cannot be granted if cheques are not already prepared, since it would upset the established program and risk delays and other difficulties in the general distribution of these cheques. We do not have sufficient knowledge to assess the validity of these objections.

This request is most reasonable if the cheques are on hand.

WE RECOMMEND:

78. That postmasters do not fail to give pay cheques to employees a few days ahead of their vacation leave, if cheques are on hand.

(5) On many occasions employees have criticized the decision of Treasury Board not to grant the benefit of the raise in pay announced on August 1, 1965, retroactive to October 1, 1964, to former employees who terminated their employment between these two dates.<sup>1/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> This decision is based on Order in Council P.C. 1964-133, dated January 30, 1964.

If we consider:

- a) that the agreement by an employer to pay a new wage rate retroactively to his employees without distinction is equivalent to recognition on his part that the former rates have proved insufficient from a certain date, and
- b) that postal employees laid off, superannuated or deceased (through their estate) actually receive the increase retroactively,

we cannot understand why all employees, without distinction, who terminated their employment between October 1, 1964, and August 1, 1965, were not also granted the increase.

We do not have the authority, under our mandate, to make any recommendation whatsoever on this matter.

(6) At the beginning of our investigation we were informed that a small number of employees because of a simple mathematical error, for which they were not responsible, had oversubscribed certain payments to the Unemployment Insurance Fund and were not reimbursed.

We are told that Treasury Board has now approved the refund of these amounts and that all employees so affected have been reimbursed or will be soon.

## 2. Acting pay

Section 13 of the Civil Service Act reads as follows:

"Where an employee is required to perform for a temporary period the duties of a higher position than the one held by him, the Commission may in accordance with the regulations authorize the payment to him of acting pay during such temporary period; and during the time that the employee is being paid acting pay he has and may exercise the power and authority of the person holding the higher position."

The Civil Service Commission has laid down in its Regulations<sup>1/</sup> that acting pay may not be paid to an employee required to perform the duties of a higher position than the one held by him for a period of less than two months.

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<sup>1/</sup> Sections 38 to 40.

The Department has further restricted the scope of this provision.

According to the Departmental Personnel Manual<sup>1/</sup> acting pay shall not be paid to an employee who replaces someone in a higher position, even for more than two months, when the regular incumbent is absent on special or vacation leave. It is also laid down that an employee who temporarily replaces several others in higher positions is not entitled to add together the replacement periods towards the minimum period of two months.

Employees protested these regulations and suggested that in their case acting pay should take effect as soon as they take on duties for which a higher salary is approved. To support this claim, they referred to the current practice in industry for operational employees. They referred to certain methods being used by some postmasters to avoid paying acting pay.

The Department claimed it was completely unaware of these methods. It even offered to investigate any abuse which is brought to its attention and to remedy any legitimate grievance.

The Department did not wish to express a firm opinion on the employees' recommendation that acting pay be paid immediately the higher duties are assumed. Instead, it pointed out that the Civil Service Commission in 1962 did not consider it advisable to modify its policy in this regard.

This may be true, but we are far from convinced that the reasons given at that time and which might be given today with regard to several classes of white collar civil servants are well founded in the case of post office employees. These employees, in fact, have very limited promotion opportunities. Only a very small number can hope to obtain a promotion because of the additional knowledge, experience, or training acquired in the execution of the duties of a higher position. Furthermore, we are doubtful that a postal clerk, a letter carrier or

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<sup>1/</sup> Under the heading "Pay" (Acting Pay).

a railway mail clerk who temporarily assumes a higher position is, in all cases, performing only part of the duties of that post.

WE RECOMMEND:

79. That by one or more amendments to the Civil Service Act and Regulations or any other document it be recognized that a post office employee is entitled to acting pay after he has performed the duties of a position higher than the one he holds for five working days, whether consecutive or cumulative, and for as long as he holds such a position.

3. Night differential

Full-time postal workers receive a night differential of 15 cents an hour which, with certain exceptions, is paid to them for each complete hour of work done between 5 p.m. and 7 a.m.<sup>1/</sup>

(1) They requested that this differential be increased either to 25 cents an hour or to 15% of the salary.

In some other departments, the night differential is 8 cents an hour between 6 p.m. and 12 midnight and 12 cents an hour between 12 midnight and 6 a.m.<sup>2/</sup> The differential rate in the Post Office Department is thus the highest in the public service. It is even higher than that generally paid in private industry.

This rate, admittedly, has not changed since 1954 and is less generous than 12 years ago when employees received eight hours pay for seven hours night work. But this is an anomaly which neither common sense nor logic justifies correcting by raising the rate of 15 cents an hour to 25 cents. We would only be making the situation more abnormal.

However, there is a compromise formula which is rather interesting and appears more reasonable to us.

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<sup>1/</sup> Order in Council, P.C. 1954-24/290, March 4, 1954.

<sup>2/</sup> Treasury Board Minute 609965, December 12, 1963.

This formula involves the adoption of a variable percentage of the wage as the determining factor in the differential rate. In other words, it means

- a) that the parties to a collective agreement recognize that the so-called night differential can vary according to whether it seeks to compensate the employee for hours worked either during the evening or at night, and
- b) that the parties agree on the percentage of the wage which in both cases seems most equitable to them.

The problem of studying the possibilities of this formula more thoroughly should be left to the staff organizations.

(2) Full-time employees also suggested that, from now on, the Department pay the night differential, to each and every individual without distinction, for every hour of work done between 5 p.m. and 7 a.m.

At present an employee does not collect his full differential unless he starts work at 5 p.m. or later, and before 6 a.m. If his shift starts before 5 p.m., he is not entitled to a differential until after 7 p.m. Or again, if his shift begins at 6 a.m., he does not receive any differential for the first hour, i.e., between 6 a.m. and 7 a.m.

The night differential is intended to compensate an employee for prescribed abnormal hours of work. As mentioned above, in other departments as well as in the industry, the right to a night differential is recognized and consistently respected. We are unable to understand the reasoning on which the Department can base its policy.

(3) There is one last point.

Casuals and some part-time employees complained about not being entitled to the night differential. Elsewhere in this Report we explain the kind of work these employees perform and the situation in which they find themselves.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> See Chapter 8, "Manpower", sections 3 and 4.

If we were to abide by the facts and circumstances which, in accordance with the letter and intent of the law, authorize the Department to hire casual help (even for a short time) and if our recommendations in favour of these people are accepted, we do not see why these employees should continue to be denied this differential since, like full-time employees, casuals may be required to work in the evening or at night.

Payment of the differential to part-time employees is a different matter.

These employees are almost permanent supernumeraries whose work, as a rule, lasts only four hours a day, five days a week. They seek this kind of work precisely because they know that it will be only part time. This suits them and they accept it for different personal reasons. They also know beforehand, as a general rule, that they will not start work before a certain time in the late afternoon and that they will finish fairly early in the evening.

In their case, therefore, we do not believe that a differential is appropriate as it is in the case of casual employees.

WE RECOMMEND:

80. That the rate of the night differential remain unchanged for the time being.
81. That the staff organizations study the possibility of adopting a new formula to establish the night differential on the basis of a percentage of the basic salary.
82. That the staff organizations, if they think it advisable, discuss this new formula during the forthcoming collective negotiations.
83. That all full-time employees be entitled to the night differential of 15 cents for each hour of work performed between 5 p.m. and 7 a.m., without exception.
84. That casual employees, like full-time employees, receive the night differential.

4. Boot allowance

In his second Report<sup>1/</sup> Mr. Justice J. C. Anderson recommended that "the

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<sup>1/</sup> Commission of Inquiry into the Increases in Rates of Pay for Civil Servants in Group D, (p.3).

boot allowance of the postal service on a semi-annual basis, for such full-time employees as now receive this allowance, be converted into the sum of \$60 annually and added to their pay."

The Treasury Board endorsed this recommendation on August 26, 1965.

Postal employees who are entitled to the boot allowance complained about this recommendation because, as indicated by Mr. Justice Anderson, it is subject to deduction for income tax and pension purposes. They have asked to revert to the former practice which, while granting an allowance, somewhat less generous, was paid twice annually and was not taxable. The rate was based on prevailing market prices for boots and the allowance was intended strictly for their purchase.

The employees claim they gained very little from this change and although they had accepted it at the time, have now come to regret it.

If this were a fundamental problem, we would hesitate to intervene but such is not the case. We also wish to emphasize that our viewpoint should not be interpreted as an expression of reproach to the Commission of Inquiry into the Increases in Rates of Pay for Civil Servants in Group D.

WE RECOMMEND:

85. That the Department revert to the practice in effect prior to August, 1965, for the payment of the boot allowance and that this amount not be considered as part of the basic salary.

Postal clerks and mail handlers do not receive any boot allowance. Many of them are required to handle heavy bulky mail bags regularly. They believe they are entitled to safety boots for their own protection and claim a special allowance.

The Department contends that these employees are not normally required to lift, move or carry mail bags except in small staff post offices and that the percentage of on-the-job accidents due to such handling is minimal.

WE RECOMMEND:

86. That the Department consider the provision of free safety boots for those employees who have to handle heavy and bulky mail bags on a regular basis.

5. Clothing

If anyone had asked us at the end of our Inquiry to state which problem throughout the country had given rise to the greatest number of suggestions, different if not dissimilar, we would not have hesitated to say that it was the problem of uniforms and clothing of all kinds.

A few examples will be enough to show both the dimension of this problem and the perplexity in which we find ourselves.

Some letter carriers described their uniforms as a "get-up" and criticized the quality of the material, the cut, and after a few months of wear, their shoddy appearance. Others complained about the shirts, summer and winter caps, and the inadequacy of waterproofing in the coats and capes. In other instances, full-time and part-time postal clerks have complained about aprons, smocks or coveralls.

No one can expect this Commission to be able or to want to decide on the choice of clothing for the post office employees, on the attractiveness of the colour, the quality of the material, shirt cloth, or on the substitutions, changes or alterations which may be required.

However, we were made to understand:

- a) that in 1951, the Department, the Union of Postal Workers and the Federated Association of Letter Carriers had agreed to set up a joint committee called "The Uniform Committee";
- b) that this committee is composed of representatives of each of the groups concerned;
- c) that the committee has held regular meetings since then;
- d) that its first and foremost function is to look into and find the best

possible solutions related to all clothing problems.

It is best, therefore, to refer to this committee all suggestions made. We acknowledge that this committee is far more capable of dealing with these suggestions since it has the knowledge and competence required.

WE RECOMMEND:

87. That post office employees through their local branches communicate to their national Headquarters all problems and suggestions of the kind referred to in this Report concerning uniforms or clothing.
88. That the national leaders submit these problems and suggestions, if they see fit to do so, to the joint Uniform Committee.
89. That this committee study these suggestions and make recommendations which it considers fair and reasonable.
90. That the Department, insofar as possible, conform to these proposals.

These recommendations take care, for all practical purposes, of most of the proposals received.

There remains, however, a few proposals on which we would like to comment in detail for the benefit of all concerned.

(1) Until now letter carriers are being provided free-of-charge in addition to their boot allowance with:

- a) pea jacket or overcoat (also known as "Weather Jacket");
- b) sackcoat (also known as "Tunic");
- c) trousers, both summer and winter;
- d) shirts;
- e) cloth cap, both summer and winter;
- f) straw hat;
- g) ties;
- h) waterproof cap cover;

- i) waterproof cape;
- j) waterproof coat;
- k) waterproof leggings;
- l) rubber boots or rubber shoes;
- m) vests (colder northern regions only);
- n) windbreakers (Prairies only).

We do not question the need for all this clothing. Moreover, the Department stated that it proposes:

- a) to issue shortly new types of uniforms and winter coats;
- b) to add to the scale of the issue woollen scarves and fur hats at the beginning of the 1966/67 winter season;
- c) in the coastal regions, to issue a new type of waterproof rainsuit which will be better adapted to weather conditions.

We have nothing to add to this list or to these proposals. In line with our recommendation we leave it to the Joint Uniform Committee to take care of omissions, if any.

(2) At some localities, letter carriers suggested better methods of distribution of clothing, i.e., that the Department use a network of warehouses located in some larger cities. The Department does not agree because it would mean the setting up of an elaborate and expensive organization which would be unrealistic because it would result likely in the over-stocking of clothing and of other various items in post offices in the larger centres.

The Department has now included penalty clauses in its contracts with suppliers for unwarranted late deliveries and is satisfied that these clauses will bring excellent results and will eliminate the delays encountered in the past.

(3) It was suggested, but only by a few letter carriers, that on initial appointment they be issued with a complete uniform by the Department

and then provided with a clothing allowance to meet future needs. The Department points out that it buys from wholesalers at a reasonably low cost, and that the letter carrier will have to pay substantially more. Moreover, the Department is fearful that, should this proposal be adopted, the letter carriers after a while might not be as well nor as uniformly clothed as they are at present.

(4) Some letter carriers recommended that the Department pay the cost for minor repairs and for the cleaning of their uniforms. This practice is not recognized, generally, outside the Department. However, we think the Department should continue to bear the costs of repair and cleaning in the case of accidents on the job.

(5) Many employees working inside post offices feel that the issue of protective clothing is inadequate.

The Department does not agree claiming that protective clothing may be replaced when worn out as it does for uniforms and shirts of letter carriers.

(6) Wicket clerks in daily contact with the public claim they are not provided with a suitable jacket and that it creates a poor public impression. They request, firmly and with persistence, that they be issued with a more presentable type of jacket.

The Department states that the joint Uniform Committee has recommended the adoption of a new style nylon cotton jacket for wicket clerks, to be issued beginning with the fiscal year 1966/67.<sup>1/</sup>

(7) Postal clerks and letter carriers have asked to be measured by a qualified tailor in their locality. We do not think that this is essential provided precise instructions are given on the relevant requisition forms and care is taken in the tailoring.

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<sup>1/</sup> We hope that this new jacket will be made in an attractive colour.

(8) Railway mail clerks do not receive a clothing allowance. Without agreeing with all their requests, one appears reasonable, i.e., the free issue of coveralls by the Department. The nature of their work and because they have to handle mail bags and creep through dusty and narrow openings (creep holes) prompt us to agree with this suggestion.

WE RECOMMEND:

91. That the Department supply coveralls to railway mail clerks.

## CHAPTER 12

### SENIORITY

The Post Office Department is one of the few departments where seniority is recognized as a major factor in some of its functions and personnel policies: selection of vacation leave periods, preferred assignments,<sup>1/</sup> bidding for shifts, shift schedules or for carriers' walks, and promotion within the railway mail clerk classification.<sup>2/</sup>

This policy and the details of its operation are the result of agreements between the Department and the staff organizations. Any innovation results always from consultation and discussion. No changes are made unilaterally.

We approve of this policy as a whole. It implies the recognition of certain rights and privileges because of an employee's length of service. Decisions become more acceptable since they no longer depend on managerial decisions, undue influence or mere whims, but on a system which has been approved and accepted by both sides. It improves human relations by creating a more peaceful atmosphere, free from bitterness or resentment.

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1/ Wicket clerks, directory clerks, assistants to supervisors in the letter carrier sections, clerks in the customs sections in some offices, and some other positions in larger staff post offices are classed usually (there are exceptions) among these positions. In such cases, except where the employee lacks the ability or knowledge required, seniority, based on continuous full-time service in the particular classification, is the deciding factor.

2/ We also deal with seniority in Chapter 15, "Competitions and Promotions".

These seniority rules have never had any legal basis until now. For the Department it is a moral obligation. Theoretically the Department can ignore them wholly or in part or repeal them. With the advent of collective bargaining these rules will be discussed from different viewpoints, including the possibility of making them part of a collective agreement. The staff organizations will evidently try to increase the scope of these rules. We have heard so often about their plans in this matter that we must discuss two of them at least.

(1) Several employees complained that, in some offices, local management had not allowed them to bid for a position which they considered a "preferred assignment", claiming that the position was not of this nature or that these employees did not have the necessary qualifications.<sup>1/</sup>

The first objection appears easy to solve although we must admit that "preferred assignments" vary from one district to another. For example, the position of wicket clerk is not always considered a "preferred assignment" while, in some places, the work of a mail handler is.

WE RECOMMEND:

92. That the Department agree to determine definitely, through local joint committees, what positions should be designated as "preferred assignments" in each staff post office.

The second objection regarding qualifications does not present too serious a problem either.

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<sup>1/</sup> This second pretext has been invoked more often.

The introduction of barrier examinations which we will discuss later<sup>1/</sup> will make it possible to identify, ahead of time, the aptitude of candidates for "preferred assignments" and to use seniority as the deciding factor, when employees are successful in these examinations.

In addition, if future collective agreements contain one or more clauses based on the seniority rules, now in force, any employee who thinks he has been wronged will be able to take advantage of the new grievance procedure.<sup>2/</sup>

(2) The staff organizations urge the application of the seniority principle in promotions. They are faced with two major obstacles:

- a) Bills C-170 (Public Service Staff Relations Act) and C-181 (Public Service Employment Act) leave entire jurisdiction in this matter to the Civil Service Commission and, as in the past, held to the merit principle in this field;<sup>3/</sup>
- b) the bargaining certification of staff organizations will probably exclude postal officers grades 1, 2 or 3 and will, at the same time, exclude these organizations from any discussion on the methods of promotion to these positions.

(3) Although, as a rule, employees are satisfied with the present seniority system, it must be admitted that methods of application vary greatly from one group to another:

- a) letter carriers base their seniority on continuous full-time service, in their particular class, regardless of location;

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1/ See Chapter 15, "Competitions and Promotions".

2/ See Chapter 17, "Grievance Procedure".

3/ See Chapter 15, "Competitions and Promotions".

- b) postal clerks, mail handlers and dispatchers, in their particular class, but only within the postal establishment;
- c) railway mail clerks, effective the date of promotion to their class and by district.<sup>1/</sup>

These different interpretations are a continuous cause of friction among the staff organizations and the Department is concerned. It believes, and rightly so, that it cannot act as a mediator and settle the disputes between the staff organizations. This is the responsibility of their respective leaders. We support the Department's approach of not interfering in the internal problems of the staff organizations of its own initiative, and of its policy to study all suggestions that these organizations wish to submit through their elected representatives.

During our Inquiry, one particular instance of friction arose which we cannot ignore.

Some years ago, all interested parties made an agreement concerning the large number of railway mail clerks who, gradually, had to be transferred to other employment.<sup>2/</sup>

The Department, realizing that these clerks were the victims of circumstances beyond their control, decided that surplus railway mail clerks should be entitled to the same pay and, after consultations with the staff organizations, to keep their earned seniority whenever they were transferred to other positions in the postal service.

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1/ We noticed that junior employees have a viewpoint different from that of the more senior employees. This is understandable.

2/ The curtailment of the railway postal service and the marked increase in services by air and highway services have resulted in a decrease in railway mail clerk positions from 1,400 in 1957 to 347 in 1966.

Thus, a railway mail clerk whose position is abolished may use his seniority to replace an employee with fewer years of service. If it is not possible to assign him to a position in the railway mail service, he assumes other functions in a post office in the area in which he resides or he is assigned as a "supernumerary". In both cases he receives his full salary. Some other specific rules apply but all are meant to keep these clerks in the postal service making sure, at the same time, that they do not unfairly displace other employees: if a railway mail clerk is assigned to a class to which he once belonged, his seniority dates back to his first appointment to that class; otherwise, his seniority dates back only to his date of appointment as a railway mail clerk.

Obviously, this has caused some friction, for instance, a railway mail clerk has been able to take advantage of 25 years service to have his name placed on the seniority list ahead of a postal clerk with 24 years service.

The Union of Postal Workers now objects strongly to this compromise, which it sees as preferential treatment for the surplus railway mail clerks and it wants these employees to forego all accumulated seniority rights when reassigned to different functions in the postal service. Needless to say the Railway Mail Clerks' Federation does not agree, especially when the railway mail clerks were initially postal clerks. This point takes on particular importance when the leave schedules for summer holidays are being drawn up.

The Department suggested different solutions, none of which appears acceptable to either side.

This problem will resolve itself, in part, if the system recommended by our Commission is adopted, i.e., that each employee have his regular share of annual leave during the summer months.<sup>1/</sup>

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1/ See Chapter 13, section 1, "Vacation Leave".

In the meantime, we suggest that separate seniority lists be drawn up for each class. The surplus railway mail clerks will thus appear on the railway mail clerks' list and not on the postal clerks list, even though they may be working inside the post office. If necessary, temporary help could be hired as replacements. This measure seems to be relatively inexpensive and most acceptable. We hope that both sides will agree with this measure willingly.

(4) The staff organizations and the employees should give serious consideration to the possibility of unreservedly extending the principle of seniority to cover all classes within a predetermined geographical area, e.g., within 20 to 100 miles depending on the local conditions in the area. Such a policy would facilitate greater flexibility of movement between classes and between post offices, a more comprehensive rotation and a greater number of transfers, while helping generally in the training and transfer of surplus employees in different functions and also in the application of seniority rights. This policy would help also to promote a better esprit de corps among the employees.

(5) Some employees feel wronged because the Department, in calculating their seniority, starts counting only from the date they were made permanent or from the date they first passed their sorting examination. A fair and reasonable formula would be to calculate seniority from the first day of continuous service.

(6) To facilitate the control of seniority, we urge the Department, in each staff post office, to have a list posted of all employees showing the effective date of their seniority.

## CHAPTER 13

### LEAVE

#### 1. Vacation leave

Vacation leave for post office employees is governed by the Civil Service Act and Regulations.<sup>1/</sup>

Each full-time employee is entitled to three weeks leave for the first 20 years of service and to an additional week after 20 years.

The Union of Postal Workers recommended that this leave be increased to four weeks after the first year of service and the Letter Carriers' Union recommended four weeks for letter carriers with 11 to 20 years service, five weeks for those with 21 to 25 years service and six weeks for those with 25 years service or more.

These two recommendations appear rather excessive. Perhaps if they were made more realistic they might be studied again and discussed with the appropriate authorities at a suitable time. We do not want to anticipate the final outcome. We note simply that the number of weeks of vacation leave to which post office employees are entitled compares favourably with the current practice in industry in Canada.

However, another aspect of vacation leave deserves immediate consideration.

In the Post Office Department, vacation leave schedules are spread over three thirteen week periods. These 39 weeks are made up of the 36 consecutive weeks between April 1 and December 1 and three weeks in March.<sup>2/</sup>

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1. Civil Service Act, section 63; Civil Service Regulations, sections 42-46.
2. For the railway mail clerks, the period of vacation leave stretches over forty-eight weeks, December being excluded.

Once the postmaster has decided how many employees can take their leave in each of the three periods, employees choose their weeks by order of seniority.<sup>1/</sup>

Each employee can take from one to three consecutive weeks each year. If an employee first chooses a period of less than three weeks, he has a second choice after all other employees have stated their own choice. An employee who prefers to take one week at a time is also given a third choice. Those who are entitled to a fourth week can bid for it separately.

This system has been strongly criticized, especially by employees who work in staff post offices, grades 12 to 19, and who have relatively very little seniority.

These people, usually younger, find it impossible to choose a period of vacation leave during the summer months when their children are out of school, the climate more temperate and most workers are on holiday.

Such a situation may last 15 years or more. It is not surprising that these employees are dissatisfied.

We believe that the present system must be changed even if this means disregarding seniority rights to some degree. We are confident that after careful consideration most of the older employees will accept this point of view and agree to sacrifice a small part of their seniority rights for the benefit of their fellow workers.

At times there are circumstances where positive action, not always pleasant, must be taken to correct a situation deteriorating to the point of becoming intolerable.

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<sup>1/</sup> To do this the postmaster in accordance with departmental instructions, considers the operational requirements of the service in his area, the estimated volume of work and the necessity of having a sufficient number of qualified staff available.

A group of employees is not necessarily justified in refusing to make any concession because it has had to wait 10 to 15 years or more, before being able to choose its holidays during the months of July and August.

Several suggestions were put forward.

In some large centres, it was proposed that all employees should take their holidays in June, July and August while the volume of mail is at its lowest and that students, for example, be engaged as "casuals" for these three months to meet some of the immediate requirements of the postal service.

It was also suggested that the period of vacation leave be spread over 25 weeks instead of 39, from April to September, in the hope that a number of the employees with the greatest seniority will choose the months of May, September or October and leave the months of June, July and August available for some of their less senior fellow workers.

We also studied the possibility of adopting a system of selecting vacation leave either on a rotational basis over two or three consecutive years or by sharing available weeks during the same year.

These various proposals are difficult to reconcile.

Under the circumstances and considering the urgency of the problem, we think it is advisable to recommend a general formula, as a happy medium, which should at least be put to the test.

Basically, this formula has two purposes.

First, to give all employees more latitude in their choice of annual vacation period and to extend it from 39 to 48 weeks, from January to November inclusive.

Secondly, to recognize, in this 48-week period, 13 "preferred" weeks between June 15 and September 15.

Once these two principles have been accepted, it would seem reasonable, according to their preferred choice:

- a) that employees with 20 or more years of service choose, in order of seniority, their holiday period either during the "preferred" weeks or outside this period;
- b) that if these senior employees choose not to take their holiday during the "preferred" weeks, they should then be entitled to take them all at once, as four consecutive weeks;
- c) that if these employees choose to take their leave during the "preferred" weeks they should abide by the present system and take three "preferred" weeks and one "non-preferred", i.e., outside the period June 15 to September 15;
- d) that employees with less than 20 years service should be divided into two groups according to seniority so that, every two years, each group is entitled to at least two "preferred" weeks, the third being taken outside this period if necessary;
- e) that employees with more than 15 but less than 20 years service, who might, between now and the next five years (to be reckoned from the date of our recommendations being put into effect), be deprived of the right of taking three consecutive "preferred" weeks should have the right, if they wish, to take four weeks holiday as long as they take these weeks outside the "preferred" period.

This formula does not disregard seniority. It only makes its application less rigorous in order to reach a definite and acceptable solution to the problem of vacation scheduling.

Far be it for us to claim that our suggestion could not be applied differently without losing sight of the dual purpose involved. The "preferred" period could well be only one week but every year, or it could be extended to three weeks every three years or two weeks every year. However the latter alternative, it must be realized,

would entail an extra staffing expenditure every year of nearly two million dollars. The Department would have to hire casual workers for some 20,450 weeks at the probable rate of \$2 an hour<sup>1/</sup> and would have to keep more supervisors on the job.

This does not mean that the formula we have proposed will not entail some extra expenditure. The Department very likely will have to hire a certain number of casual employees. We hope that the staff organizations and their branches will not oppose this. In some localities this policy might mean an interesting summer job for students who must find remunerative work if they are to continue or complete their studies.

These proposals deserve serious consideration by both the Government and the staff organizations. It is quite possible also that the best answer might be a combination of these various alternatives.

WE RECOMMEND:

93. That the official period of vacation leave be spread over 48 weeks from January 1 to November 30 inclusive, each year.
94. That during this period the weeks between June 15 and September 15 be designated as "preferred".
95. That employees with 20 or more years service be allowed to choose their holidays, by order of seniority, either within or outside this "preferred" period.
96. That if these employees choose their holidays outside the "preferred" period they be entitled to take them all at once, in four consecutive weeks.
97. That if they do not so choose they hold to the present system and take three "preferred" weeks and then one "non-preferred" week, i.e., outside the period June 15 to September 15.

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<sup>1/</sup> This information was obtained from the Department.

98. That employees with less than 20 years service be divided into two groups according to seniority so that, once every two years, each group will be entitled to at least two "preferred" weeks, the third week being taken outside the "preferred" period if necessary.

99. That employees with more than 15 but less than 20 years service, who will thus be prevented for the next five years from taking full advantage of their present entitlement to three consecutive "preferred" weeks, be entitled as a bonus, if they so request, to a 'fourth week' holiday in addition to the present three, with the express condition, however, that they take all four weeks during the "non-preferred" period.

We have drawn the Department's attention to a misunderstanding which seems to exist with some postmasters who allow some supervisors' names to appear in the employees' vacation leave schedules.

The Department has promised to clear up this misunderstanding.

WE RECOMMEND:

100. That the Department, once more, remind the district directors and postmasters that the employees' vacation leave schedule is and must remain for the exclusive use of full-time non-supervisory operating employees.

2. Sick leave

The postal service requires that employees work steadily every hour of every working day. If a postal clerk, wicket clerk or letter carrier is absent for any reason whatsoever, he must be replaced immediately, because the mail must be processed and delivered at all cost.

This is why the Department is so concerned about the problem of absenteeism attributed in part to the possible abuse of sick leave. Sick leave is granted in accordance with the Civil Service Regulations.<sup>1/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> Sections 47 to 54.

Headquarters has issued directives accordingly and one in particular states that a postmaster may "... temporarily withdraw, for a specific period, the privilege of casual leave from an employee who appears to be abusing this privilege".<sup>1/</sup> The word "appears" in the above quote should be deleted. Penalties should be considered only in clear-cut instances of abuse.

Some supervisors investigate employees' absences at unexpected hours or without using any discretion or judgment.

Headquarters does not approve of this approach and is ready to deal severely with supervisors who make use of these methods indiscriminately. It has recently changed its policy and it now tolerates the checking of absences by home visits or any other method only if the employee's record indicates serious possibilities of abuse.

The Department obviously believes that this method of supervision is necessary in certain cases. We are skeptical about its practical effectiveness: how can a supervisor with no professional medical knowledge determine, beyond reasonable doubt, whether an employee is sick or not?

WE RECOMMEND:

101. That, in future, only in obvious cases of abuse should absence on sick leave be checked, and that home visits be made at a reasonable hour. In all cases and no matter who is contacted, discretion and good judgment be used.

The Department should set up a different control system which would make it easier, following interview with the employees concerned, to distinguish between questionable and genuine cases. This system would help to forestall objections from the employees themselves and quite possibly would restrain the staff organizations

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<sup>1/</sup> Personnel Manual, "Leave - sick".

from protesting when disciplinary action is taken and would leave the staff organizations in a better position to have recourse, if necessary, to the grievance procedure in cases of reprehensible checks.

On the other hand, some employees should consider the possible consequences of outside work which may not only affect their regular work but also become the direct or indirect cause of absences unwarranted in the eyes of the Department.

The morale of an employee plays a part in his use or abuse of sick leave. An employee who is happy in his work reports for duty unless he is really unable to do so, whereas the employee who gets little satisfaction from his work finds all kinds of excuses to justify a real or imaginary illness.

WE RECOMMEND:

102. That the Department carry out a detailed study of the normal use and abuse of sick leave.
103. That it draw up a chart to pinpoint its occurrence and work out a system to identify at a glance those employees who are about to abuse the privilege or who are already doing so.
104. That the Department start an instructional programme to teach supervisors their responsibilities and duties in this area.
105. That the Department notify each employee when he has taken five days of casual sick leave out of the permissible seven days, not to threaten him but to do him a service, and that for this purpose Headquarters draft a form letter with appropriate wording for use by the field offices.

3. Special leave with pay

The Civil Service Regulations<sup>1/</sup> provide that a deputy head may grant an employee special leave with pay for a period not exceeding one week:

- a) where there is illness or a death in the employee's family;
- b) where the employee is to be married;

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<sup>1/</sup> Sections 55 to 58.

- c) where circumstances not directly attributable to the employee prevent his reporting for duty;
- d) under such other circumstances as the Civil Service Commission may approve.

Postal employees made the following suggestions:

- (1) That where there is a death in the family, special leave be always granted for a minimum period of one week.

We do not support this suggestion because it could give rise to serious abuses. The policy of the Department should be maintained. The latter, under the circumstances, grants special leave from the day of death to the day of the funeral inclusively and allows travelling time if required. If required it also grants additional special leave during the year following the death to the employee concerned who is an executor of the estate.

With respect to the official definition of the word "family" we propose that the appropriate authorities consider the possibility of extending the meaning to include the next of kin of the employee's husband or wife, such as a brother-in-law or sister-in-law.

- (2) That the right to special leave may be requested and granted in maternity cases where an employee must deal with special problems caused by the hospitalization of his wife.

The Department states that special leave granted where there is illness in the family covers unexpected illness and that, usually, maternity cases do not fit in this category. It has no objection to granting special leave in the case of a premature birth or in special circumstances when the employee must arrange for the care of his children on short notice.

A broader interpretation should be given to subsection (c) of section 55 of the Civil Service Regulations. The Department, where "circumstances not directly

attributable to the employee prevent his reporting for duty" or remaining at work, would have greater discretion and could take into account the unexpected and imponderable demands of nature.

(3) That special leave be granted an employee on the wedding day or ordination or vow taking day of one of his children. The Department holds that these events are not unexpected. We do not disagree that this is normally so and since employees already are eligible for many types of special leave with pay, we are not making any formal recommendation.

#### 4. Leave without pay

The Civil Service Regulations give deputy heads the authority to grant leave without pay under specified circumstances.<sup>1/</sup>

Although the staff organizations admit that the Department has always been co-operative in granting leave without pay to employees selected as delegates to their respective national conventions, they request that this leave no longer be considered a privilege but an express right.

This request appears reasonable to us.

#### WE RECOMMEND:

106. That the Civil Service Regulations be amended to allow postal employees who are official delegates to conventions of their organizations leave without pay as a right.
107. That a reasonable number of such delegates be selected depending on the postal districts they represent.
108. That travel time to and from the convention be included.
109. That at least one week's prior notice be given by the staff organizations in each case.

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<sup>1/</sup> Sections 69 to 74.

## CHAPTER 14

### PROFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS

The Post Office Act empowers the Postmaster General to make regulations under which employees must take proficiency examinations, and if unsuccessful have their salary or rank reduced.<sup>1/</sup>

The Postmaster General has exercised this right. Until now,<sup>2/</sup> employees performing sorting or wicket duties, supervisory postal officers 1 and 2, mail despatchers and railway mail clerks<sup>3/</sup> have had to submit to examinations on a regular basis.

Nearly everywhere we went we heard bitter criticism about these examinations. We shall merely refer to the more frequently heard complaints.

Employees criticized the Department for its policy requiring employees to pass these examinations, year in year out as long as they are employed by the Department or until the employee has reached the age of sixty. They blame the Department for not giving enough consideration to their daily performance and for attaching an exaggerated importance to duties which employees seldom have to perform. They disapproved of the pass marks required, as being too high or even unfair. They objected to the time and place the examinations are given which sometimes have a bearing on the outcome of an examination. Finally, they rebelled against the penalties imposed for failures, especially the small salary adjustments made after a second attempt has proved successful.

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<sup>1/</sup> Section 6 (o).

<sup>2/</sup> The Department has recently adopted a new proficiency examination procedure which, according to the latest information at our disposal, is supposed to come into effect in the near future.

<sup>3/</sup> Departmental Personnel Manual under the heading "Examinations", p. 1.

Needless to say, many ways and means to improve the system were suggested including the outright abolition of these examinations.

The great majority of employees concerned did not support this rather drastic measure. They are not opposed, in principle, to the continuation of an examination policy but are disturbed by the procedures and methods of the system.

The new departmental examination policy and procedure, which is formulated on basic principles quite different from the previous ones, will undoubtedly be welcome.

Generally, the new procedure will:

- a) determine beforehand the knowledge requirements;
- b) provide for the training of a sorter in line with the knowledge required and according to a predetermined degree of accuracy;
- c) limit examinations to a period of five years and thereafter make them mandatory only where necessary;
- d) advocate counselling methods intended to correct an employee's shortcomings in case of failure;
- e) authorize the imposition of penalties only where there is no improvement;
- f) cancel these penalties and restore the salary or classification level of the employee as soon as he passes his examination.

This new policy was the subject of preliminary consultations and discussions with the national officers of the Union of Postal Workers. We are told that the latter took advantage of these talks to urge the Department to make certain changes in the procedure. They succeeded in doing so to an appreciable extent.<sup>1/</sup> This is a good example of the vast possibilities of a real dialogue.

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<sup>1/</sup> We learned recently that the Railway Mail Clerks' Federation, informed by the Department of its new examination policy, has also submitted its viewpoint and suggestions.

Since the Union of Postal Workers itself, at the beginning of May 1966, forwarded the text of the new departmental examination procedure to each of its branches across the country, it is not necessary for us to deal with it in greater detail. As far as we are concerned, the new procedure appears to be an acceptable solution to the main problems raised by employees and we share the favourable opinion expressed by the national leaders of the Union in a letter enclosed with the draft new examination procedure.

WE RECOMMEND:

110. That postal clerks and railway mail clerks who have to take departmental examinations comply with the new policy adopted by the Department so that it might be possible in time to assess its true value.
111. That, if need be, the Department discuss with the staff organizations any change in this proposed policy which might prove effective, necessary or reasonable.

## CHAPTER 15

### COMPETITIONS AND PROMOTIONS

In the course of a year the Department appoints quite a number of Postal Officers 1 and 2. Generally, they are selected among the non-supervisory operating staff, either by so-called "closed" competitions, or without competition when the Department deems a competition unnecessary.<sup>1/</sup>

Closed competitions come under the Civil Service Commission's jurisdiction. However, it may delegate its powers to a deputy-head "in relation to the selection of candidates for a position".<sup>2/</sup> This procedure is followed in the Post Office Department.

When the Department holds a competition it appoints a rating board composed of three members. This board studies candidates' files, evaluates the information provided in their application and the efficiency ratings given by their supervisors. If necessary, it conducts a personal interview with each candidate. It may even subject applicants to an examination. In other words, it tries to assess the qualifications of applicants by all of the means at its disposal.

The Department was greatly surprised to learn that these competitions and the promotion system as a whole were criticized more bitterly than anything else.

(1) A good number of employees claim that promotions are "fixed" beforehand, i.e., the employee wanted by a supervisor, or in some cases, by a postmaster at the smaller establishments, is first earmarked, then trained or put to the test

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<sup>1/</sup> In either case, anyone who is not selected and deems himself aggrieved has the right to appeal before the Civil Service Commission.

<sup>2/</sup> Civil Service Act, section 39.

in different occupations or duties which are likely to prepare him properly and to enhance his knowledge and experience. Thus, the competition becomes a mere formality since only the "privileged" employee is really able to fulfil the prescribed requirements and to write the examination successfully. In brief, the chances are far from being the same for all employees!

These are serious charges. It would have been necessary to make a detailed enquiry into each complaint to ascertain their absolute accuracy. Time was not available. We might then have found that distinctions were necessary. We might even have discovered evidence of exaggeration or prejudice. In any case, we would have retained more or less the same impression but, regardless, some impression would have remained. It was humanly impossible to be otherwise: no one exposed to such a stream of protests, on several occasions and in different areas, could not but believe that there is at least some justification for these complaints.

We want to be clearly understood.

After interviewing officials at Headquarters, district directors and postmasters in the larger offices, we are certain that none of them, be it directly or indirectly, has ever encouraged such dealings let alone taken part in them. In any organization the size of the Post Office Department, those who, at the national, district or local level, have the final word cannot always be aware of and know everything, especially when the interested parties do not lodge an official complaint and do not request a detailed investigation.

Nevertheless, an unhealthy and intolerable atmosphere of suspicion and distrust regarding competitions and promotions exists at present in more than one post office and the Department must, at all costs, take immediate steps to adopt measures which will prevent such discredit to persist.

WE RECOMMEND:

112. That lists be posted in every staff post office showing future probable or possible promotions to postal officers 1, 2 or 3.
113. That employees be invited to enter their names on these lists.
114. That steps be taken to give each employee whose name appears on the list equal opportunity to carry out duties or tasks to enable him to improve his promotion possibilities.

If the Department agrees to these recommendations, not only will it be protected from all reasonable reproach, but it will create, right from the start, an atmosphere of confidence. These precautions, moreover, will help to put forward its plans for the institution of a new appraisal program for its non-supervisory operating staff, and a barrier examination aimed at serving as a screening device in future competitions.

(2) It comes as no surprise, under the circumstances, that employees also lashed out against the rating boards. They claim the Department does not always appoint adequately qualified persons to sit on these boards. Many of them rebel against the presence of the applicants' immediate supervisor. Others feel there exists an atmosphere of favouritism, or they complain that the production of confidential reports, unknown to the applicants, is tolerated.

Let us examine these facts one by one.

a) No task is more thankless than that of a rating board. Even if its selection is made with utmost honesty and impartiality it lays itself open to criticism, be it only from one unsuccessful candidate. It is impossible to arrive at an infallible process or a magic formula in such a subjective sphere of activity. We will not attempt to develop such a formula. But here again we believe that Headquarters acts, and wants to act, in the best interests of everyone, and should not be held responsible for judgments made

in good faith, in its selections.<sup>1/</sup> As to wilful bias, favouritism or unwarranted influence, it bluntly disapproves of these practices and at the same time is unable to believe they occur.

b) There is one aspect in the composition of rating boards which troubles our Commission, i.e., the presence on the board of the immediate supervisor of one or more candidates. The Department insists upon this. It claims that it is the supervisor who knows best the requirements of the position advertised. We respect this point of view. We do not believe this justifies his appointment as a member of the board. The supervisor, undoubtedly, must have his say. Nothing prevents him from appearing before the board, from giving testimony, expressing his views as to the individual merits of the candidates, and even from making his own recommendations. Between that and his appointment as a voting member of the board, there is quite a difference. We feel that his presence can only give rise to unfavourable comments and lead to insinuations of injustice, unfair promotion, or mere complacency. Why not avoid these comments? Besides, would not the supervisor himself stand to gain in prestige and authority? Not having taken part in the selection, nobody will be in a position to blame him for having unduly influenced the board during its discussions.

WE RECOMMEND:

115. That the Department refrain from appointing as a member of a competition rating board the immediate supervisor of one or more applicants.

c) In all our discussions dealing with rating boards, we felt that too much weight was given to the capacities applicants had shown in the past, such as

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1/ Many railway mail clerks suggested that an official from the district office should always sit on the board. These people said that too often the board, entirely made up of officials belonging to local post offices, does not possess adequate knowledge of their duties and responsibilities. The Department must always make sure that a rating board has a thorough knowledge of all factors which must be taken into consideration in the assessment of applicants' qualifications.

mail processing knowledge, speed of operation, etc., to the detriment of their aptitude to become leaders of men.

WE RECOMMEND:

116. That in promotions more consideration be given to a candidate's leadership abilities.

d) We disapprove of a rating board making use of any confidential reports which applicants have not been allowed to see and discuss. We cannot conceive of a rating board not listening to both sides of the story.

WE RECOMMEND:

117. That all reports available to the rating board, be they called "confidential" or not, be shown to the applicants concerned and that these applicants be granted the right to question their content if they so desire.

e) Some employees suggested that their staff organization appoint one member of the rating board. We reject this suggestion because this representative will always be in an awkward position. How will he make a selection between several members of his own staff organization without the risk of offending them all, save one? Until feelings cool off, it will be sufficient to invite a representative of the staff organization to sit in at the meetings and discussions of the board as an observer. We think that his presence will reassure more than one candidate and will put a stop to a good many protests, justified or otherwise.

WE RECOMMEND:

118. That, until further notice, a representative of the staff organizations concerned sit in at meetings and discussions of the rating boards, as an observer.

(3) After expressing their disapproval so bluntly for the present system, the employees showed their marked preference for the seniority principle as a promotion factor over that of merit, which is the sole criterion recognized for promotion in the Public Service. The national leaders of the staff organizations assured our Commission that they intend to get this idea across during forthcoming collective bargaining negotiations. However, none of them explained how far they would be willing to go in giving up, in whole or in part, the benefits and advantages which many of the present laws provide them, as civil servants, in order to achieve this goal. This must be considered seriously, and we hope the staff organizations will examine all aspects of the question before abandoning anything.

The Department is in favour of the status quo and considers, moreover, that the granting of promotions is a management prerogative.

Even if it is true that in the private sector the promotion system is discussed usually within the limits of certification held by a union, we are concerned here with a universal dispute, which will not be settled very soon and which leads to many compromises when one has to write it into a collective agreement. Few employers accept the seniority principle as the sole and exclusive factor for promotion. In the great majority of Canadian contracts that the Commissioner has scrutinized during the past 15 years, he has noted a compromise is accepted where the number of years of service may become a decisive factor, provided the employee possesses the necessary qualifications or that his qualifications are rated at least equal to those of other candidates. Unions feel, and rightly so, that this compromise does not often favour the senior employee and leaves him very little chance of appealing successfully before an arbitration board. Our labour jurisprudence, to date, will show instead that the trend has been for an arbitration board not to reverse an employer's decision unless the latter has committed a gross error of judgment or has acted in bad faith.

In spite of these objections, we personally have always preferred a compromise. It is to the advantage of both the employer and employees that senior vacant positions be filled by competent employees first of all, with seniority becoming a decisive factor whenever candidates have the required general aptitude. We believe that if too much weight is given to seniority, it could destroy the sense of initiative for many or curb ambition in the younger employees. At worst, it could discourage these employees and make them look for a job elsewhere. Finally, nothing proves that experience gained through the years while performing certain duties provides the older employee with all the qualifications essential to assume other more or less related responsibilities. And above all, nothing - and this is often the case - will guarantee that this employee possesses thereby the leadership qualities to which we referred previously.

We wanted to discuss and take a definite stand on this matter which was mentioned so often and which employees said should be treated in the Civil Service as it is in the private sector. Considered as a compromise, we agree with the seniority principle but we do not see it as absolute in either one of these areas.

Actually, these considerations are of a rather secondary importance considering the legislation proposed by the Government.

Bill C-181 (Public Service Employment Act) stipulates that appointments to the Public Service shall be based "on selection according to merit", as determined by the Civil Service Commission, "by competition or by such other process as the Commission considers is in the best interests of the Public Service".<sup>1/</sup> In determining the basis of assessment of merit, the Commission, subject to certain reservations, may "prescribe selection standards as to education, knowledge, experience, language, age, residence or any other matters that, in the opinion of the Commission, are necessary or desirable".<sup>2/</sup>

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1/ Section 10.

2/ Section 12.

In referring to Bill C-170 (Public Service Staff Relations Act), we see that "no arbitral award shall deal with the standards, procedures or processes governing the appointment, appraisal, promotion, demotion, transfer, lay-off or release of employees, or with any term or condition of employment of employees that was not a subject of negotiations between the parties during the period before the negotiating relationship between them was terminated".<sup>1/</sup>

These three references and other passages, together with the one quoted previously,<sup>2/</sup> lead us to conclude that the Government does not wish to consider employment and promotions as negotiable and wants to retain merit as the basic criterion.

(4) A few other related grievances were heard.

a) Some employees complained that internal competition notices are not posted in a prominent place. It is the practice to post these notices in the office order book. The postmaster has the responsibility to ensure this is done. We have noted that employees leaf through this book almost every day and we do not see any need to take additional precautions.

b) It was suggested that the time limit for making application in a competition be extended from 15 to 30 days. It was alleged that employees on holiday had missed opportunities to compete because they were not notified. The Department believes the time limit adequate in itself. We believe that this time limit should be 20 working days since employees can be on leave for that many days.

c) It was requested that the Department adopt a common entrance examination for all classes of employment, increase the minimum educational requirements at the same time, and ensure a better calibre of employees.

The Department is looking into the desirability of raising educational standards for future applicants. However, it has doubts on the advantages to be gained by the introduction of a common entrance examination. On the

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<sup>1/</sup> Section 70 (3).

<sup>2/</sup> See Chapter 5, "Collective Bargaining".

basis of its experience it feels that examinations must be tailored to meet the needs of district or local postal service. Moreover, if the employees' request for standardization is aimed at improving staff flexibility among various positions within the same post office, the Department believes that to achieve such results such standardization must be accompanied by some lessening of the rigidity on seniority within each class.

We are impressed with this viewpoint but once more do not know how far the staff organizations want to go in making concessions on seniority. It can only be left to them to resume, at the proper time, the study of this request with the Department. In fact, the Department sees no objection to the above suggestion.

d) Some letter carriers, who qualified by competition as postal clerks alleged they were not allowed a choice of the section in which they wished to work, and that their names had even been removed from the eligible list following their refusal to fill the first vacancy available.

This is not in accordance with the departmental policy. If a candidate decides not to accept an appointment to a position offered him in a particular section he is passed over only temporarily, and his name is not struck off the eligible list. His rank in the order of priority on the list is maintained as long as the list remains valid and he is always offered the next vacant position.

e) It was proposed that surplus railway mail clerks be excluded from supervisory clerical and postal officer competitions and that these competitions be restricted to postal clerks. The Department is not prepared to exclude either active or surplus railway mail clerks, or anyone else, from promotional competitions. This is a fair and reasonable attitude which we support wholeheartedly.

f) It has often been said that postal clerks had a distinct advantage over letter carriers in promotions and that railway mail clerks were favoured over both classes.

The Department recognizes that there are more opportunities opened to postal clerks than to letter carriers due to the greater number of supervisors for the former class. It admits that railway mail clerks, on account of their more extensive knowledge of mail distribution and routing procedures, enjoy a definite advantage but it acts according to its own rules and considers all applications for promotion no matter who applies. We might well ask ourselves if charges of favouritism would not become even more numerous, if the Department agreed to accept distinctions between categories of employees.

g) Some people feel that when they are unsuccessful in a competition they should be informed of the reasons for their failure to qualify, so that they may correct their weaknesses.

Departmental regulations do make provision for this.

After the results of a competition have been announced each applicant, at his own request, may consult either the Chairman, or a member of the rating board. This person is empowered to inform the candidate of the weak points which affected his rating and to advise him what he should do to improve himself. We feel that few employees make use of this prerogative. We hope, in view of the Department's new plans and following our recommendations, that a greater number of employees will seek to understand the whys and wherefores behind everything and will be encouraged to move ahead.

WE RECOMMEND:

119. That the staff organizations, if they deem it appropriate, discuss with the Department the advantages of introducing a common entrance examination in the Post Office Department for all entrance classes and at the same time raise the minimum educational requirements.

120. That unsuccessful applicants in competitions consult the rating board on the reasons for their failure and thus be informed of their shortcomings taking into account the basic requirements accepted by the rating board for the said competition.

## CHAPTER 16

### DISCIPLINE

No one can dispute the need for the adoption of a code of discipline in the field operating services of the Post Office Department. There, as elsewhere, the employer must ensure that not only order and efficiency are maintained, but of necessity must be concerned with the protection and security of the mail. But disciplinary measures must at all times remain fair and logical. Furthermore, and this is essential, they must be applied with common sense and discretion.

These aspects of the problem were the subject of numerous comments. Before discussing them we should say that

- a) during January 1966 the Department informed the Commission that it intends to alter drastically its policy on disciplinary matters, and
- b) Bill C-170 (Public Service Staff Relations Act) opens the door to negotiation on "standards of discipline".

(1) Of all the existing disciplinary measures the one most opposed and discredited is the system of temporary salary reductions, commonly referred to as "the fine system".

Two examples will suffice.

An employee who is absent without leave is liable to a deduction of \$10.00 from his monthly salary for the first offence, \$30.00 spread over three months for the second offence, and \$60.00 spread over six months for the third. A letter carrier who loses his post office official key (which costs approximately 25 cents and is only a pass-key) may have to pay from \$5.00 for the first one to

\$25.00 for the third one.<sup>1/</sup>

Basically employees object to working with reduced compensation even if only for an hour or so. Undoubtedly such is the result of the system of temporary salary reductions. They would prefer to be placed under suspension. These employees claim that the Department will retain a better sense of proportion in the suspension of an employee knowing that he will have to be replaced.

The Department made a point of explaining the origin of this system. A number of years ago, an employee had to work one or more additional hours at the regular rate of pay as a penalty for a minor offence. Following protests from the staff organizations the Department agreed to abolish this system and to suspend the offending employee for various lengths of time. Shortly after this, around 1959, the present system was adopted, apparently by mutual consent, to lessen the severity of the suspension.

Among the numerous changes which the Department intends to incorporate in its revised code of discipline is the abolition of the system of temporary salary reductions. We are in agreement even if a suspension becomes more costly to the employee than a temporary salary reduction.

WE RECOMMEND:

121. That, as proposed, the Department abolish the system of temporary salary reductions in matters of discipline.

(2) Another criticism of the present code of discipline was that it is not sufficiently realistic.

This criticism should be qualified.

If the Department is to be blamed it is not because it has not attempted, at the Headquarters' level, to convince local supervisors of the advisability of

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<sup>1/</sup> We shall see in Chapter 17 that the imposition of such "fines" can be a cause for grievance.

being humane when taking disciplinary action, but rather because some postmasters and their immediate assistants, as well as a few district directors, cared little whether or not departmental directives were being implemented as intended.

We find in the Personnel Manual,<sup>1/</sup> this instruction to supervisors:

"Discipline is a basic responsibility of supervisors. A supervisor should regard any misbehaviour by an employee as a challenge to be met with all the supervisor's skills in the broad area of human relationships. He should be alert to the danger of taking only negative action as punishment for a particular incident instead of giving adequate thought to the type of positive action which may help the employee to improve the quality of his services. Under the constant pressure of time, there is usually an inevitable tendency to take punitive action against the employee as the quickest and least time-consuming treatment of the problem. More constructive types of treatment such as counselling, and closer supervision require not only more time but more skill, and therefore they make greater demands on the employee's supervisor."

And it goes on to say that when a supervisor considers:

"... that the negative action of punishment is inevitably necessary on certain occasions, there is a problem of reaching a reasonable balance between flexibility according to the particular circumstances and consistency within the local office and across the country..."<sup>2/</sup>

Then, referring specifically to "The chart of irregularities and applicable penalties" attached to its code of discipline, the Department clearly states that the chart provides merely a general "guide" and that "the proposed penalties should not be regarded as automatic". It also states that "there is always a need for the employee's superiors to exercise discretion" and that "local officials always have the authority to excuse an irregularity for valid reasons or to recommend a lesser penalty than the one suggested in the chart..."

The Department could hardly express more clearly the intent governing the implementation and daily application of the standards of discipline. Obviously, it has not been too well understood. The Department is well aware of this now and

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<sup>1/</sup> See "Discipline", section 4.

<sup>2/</sup> See "Discipline", section 5.

has developed a plan based on a more positive approach which most likely will be more readily understood by supervisors and other persons concerned.

Without going into detail - detail which the Department intends not only to make known to the staff organizations but also to discuss with them - the plan provides for various types of disciplinary measures, such as appropriate counselling as the first remedial action, and if unsuccessful, verbal or written notices or reprimands, demotion or possible suspension, and as a last resort dismissal.

This new procedure, as long as all interested parties co-operate, may well ensure considerable progress towards better relations between the Department and its employees. We hope that employees will agree to give it a fair trial.

WE RECOMMEND:

122. That the Department complete the preparation of its new code of discipline as soon as possible.
123. That as soon as it is ready this code be discussed with the national officers of the staff organizations through the national joint committees.
124. That once the code has been revised it be put into effect immediately.
125. That both the Department and the staff organizations make the necessary arrangements to see that the code is clearly understood by all interested parties.
126. That all levels - district directors, postmasters, their immediate assistants, supervisors, as well as employees - make an honest effort to ensure that the new code of discipline is put into practice according to the letter and intent.

(3) Employees also object to the practice, far too widespread in several post offices, of placing on the employees' personal files, notes, remarks or warnings of all kinds, without their knowledge.

These objections might appear of minor importance but this is not the case. The Department has the right to consult, at any time, the personal file of an employee for any reason whatsoever. It is thoroughly reviewed when an employee is being considered for promotion.

We believe that nothing should be placed on file without the employee being told and given the opportunity, if he believes he has been wronged, to take the necessary steps either personally or through the grievance procedure.

The Department does not go far enough, since it does not feel compelled to inform an employee when disciplinary action is not taken immediately, and when it merely places a note on his file. This disregards the consequences to which we have referred previously.

WE RECOMMEND:

127. That no remark, note or warning be placed on the personal file of an employee without his knowledge.
128. That an employee be required to sign these remarks, notes or warnings and to state whether or not he agrees with their content.
129. That any employee who believes he has been wronged under such circumstances be given the right not only to complain to the appropriate person but also, if he so wishes, to make use of the grievance procedure.

(4) Postal employees object to the departmental policy of retaining for an indefinite period, in their personal history file, all references to errors, infractions or offences committed throughout the years.

This is certainly not current practice in industry.

WE RECOMMEND:

130. That all errors, infractions or offences placed on the personal history file of an employee be removed after two years, as long as that same employee does not repeat the same error, infraction, or offence during these two years.

## CHAPTER 17

### GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

An organization the size of the Post Office Department, which employs a non-supervisory staff numbering more than 25,000, should have adopted a well defined grievance procedure sufficiently flexible to deal as fairly and expeditiously as possible with individual or collective grievances of its employees or with disputes on the interpretation or application of its regulations and directives.

The Department, to date, has not been equal to the task.

From time to time, the Department has approved of certain suggestions by some of the more enterprising local branches of the staff organizations. In one large centre employees produced as an exhibit a grievance procedure which had been in use for a short time. We were told that local management had agreed to the need for setting time limits of various lengths, and for identifying beforehand the successive steps for the hearing of grievances.

But these are exceptions to the rule.

It must be recognized that the lack of action by the Department, on the whole, has been detrimental to the maintenance of good staff relations. This lack explains the unhealthy attitude of many employees and the tendency of several representatives of local branches to overlook the possibilities of any discussion at the district level and instead to refer their grievances directly to their national Headquarters as soon as a settlement is unduly delayed.

We should not dwell on this particular aspect or on other criticisms which apply to circumstances which are different today.

Bills C-170 (Public Service Staff Relations Act) and C-181 (Public Service Employment Act) contain several provisions related to grievances and make certain recommendations which we would not have hesitated to formulate unnecessary.

Unless we are mistaken these Bills recognize three categories of grievances and three procedures to deal with them.

(1) With the impending acceptance of collective agreements in the Public Service, there are those grievances which deal either with the interpretation or the application of these agreements or with disciplinary action resulting in dismissal, suspension or financial penalty.<sup>1/</sup>

These grievances are presented at each level, up to and including the final level, "in the grievance process provided for by this Act".<sup>2/</sup>

If these are then not dealt with to the employee's satisfaction, they may be referred to a final and binding adjudication.<sup>3/</sup>

(2) For all practical purposes, the second category covers all grievances which:

- a) do not fit the first category;
- b) relate to the conditions of employment of an employee who feels aggrieved by the interpretation or application of any provision of a statute, regulation, directive or other document prepared or issued by the employer or as a result of any incident or special problem; and

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<sup>1/</sup> Bill C-170, section 91.

<sup>2/</sup> Bill C-170, sections 90, 91 and 99.

<sup>3/</sup> Bill C-170, section 96.

c) are not controlled by an administrative procedure for redress provided in another Act of Parliament.<sup>1/</sup>

However, in such cases there is a fundamental difference. These grievances also go through the various levels (up to and including the final level), but they are not subject to final and binding adjudication as are those in the first category.<sup>2/</sup>

(3) The third category includes grievances which the legislator has decided to deal with in still another way. For example, these include grievances which, as before, are submitted as appeals to the Civil Service Commission. Civil servants are entitled to appeal in cases of a promotion denied, a demotion, or a dismissal for incompetence.<sup>3/</sup>

We are under the impression that the staff organizations and postal employees will be satisfied with these new provisions since they represent such a long awaited innovation. They will be especially pleased that the right to have recourse to boards of adjudication (even if it is somewhat restricted) has finally been granted and that they will be able to select one of the members of the board whose decisions will be final.<sup>4/</sup>

We anticipate, nevertheless, certain reservations, some of which perhaps will disappear either following amendments suggested by the Parliamentary Committee or information given by Treasury Board and the Department, or possibly following the recommendations made hereafter.

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1/ Bill C-170, section 90.

2/ Bill C-170, sections 90 and 95.

3/ We shall deal with these appeals in the following chapter.

4/ We are somewhat surprised that Bill C-170 completely disregards the possibility that the Department and the staff organizations could agree on the selection of a Chairman who would not be one of the semi-permanent adjudicators referred to in section 92.

(1) Thus, we are concerned about the implications and the extent of the regulations which the Public Service Staff Relations Board may make under section 99 of Bill C-170 (Public Service Staff Relation Act).

We fail to see how these regulations will succeed in standardizing the grievance procedure in the Public Service. The Department and the staff organizations must be free and have the required authority to adopt a grievance procedure adapted to facts and circumstances which make the Post Office Department beyond all doubt a unique department.

(2) The number and types of grievances which are subject to final and binding adjudication appear to us to be too restricted.

All actions that the Department has the right to take against an employee should form the basis of grievances in this category. This could be under any Act or under its regulations, directives or instructions, and which, directly or indirectly, may in future affect the working conditions of this employee, such as promotion, demotion, or transfer. If such were the case, not only would employees be treated more impartially but this would put an end to the habit of some supervisors to note on an employee's file, without his knowledge, the least little error or trifling matter.

WE RECOMMEND:

131. That the Department and the staff organizations be given the authority and be free to adopt a grievance procedure which really takes into consideration all aspects and problems which make the Post Office Department, beyond a doubt, a special and unique department.
132. That postal employees be given the right to have recourse to final and binding adjudication for any grievances arising from any action taken against them by the Department and which is not settled to their satisfaction.

## CHAPTER 18

### APPEALS TO THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

There are grievances which, notwithstanding the innovations proposed in Bills C-170 (Public Service Staff Relations Act) and C-181 (Public Service Employment Act), remain under the jurisdiction of the Civil Service Commission and are dealt with through its appeal procedure. This may occur in the case of a candidate who is unsuccessful in a closed competition or of a civil servant whose opportunity for advancement has been adversely affected because no competition was held<sup>1/</sup> or of an employee who is considered incompetent or incapable of performing his duties and who is demoted or released.<sup>2/</sup>

Until the Civil Service Commission, with the approval of the Governor General in Council, adopts new regulations covering appeals we can only deal with this subject in the light of the present legislation.

The Commission, as soon as an appeal has been registered, appoints an Appeal Board consisting of three persons nominated by the Commission. This board conducts an inquiry and submits a report with its recommendations to the Commission. The Commission is not bound by these recommendations and remains free to amend or reject them.<sup>3/</sup>

Postal employees presented several objections. Even in the context of

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1/ Bill C-181, section 21.

2/ Bill C-181, section 31.

3/ Civil Service Act, sections 27, 56 and 70.

Bill C-181 (Public Service Employment Act) some of these objections remain serious and valid.

(1) The first deals with the composition of Appeal Boards.

The Commission used to select one of its own officers as Chairman, and as members two senior civil servants employed at the national, regional or local level in departments other than the department directly concerned. Recently, it amended its policy and decided that it would no longer call on the services of these civil servants and thus would eliminate suspicions, entertained by employees, which reflected on the absolute impartiality of these boards.

In our considered opinion the Civil Service Commission should go one step further and, in case of an appeal by a postal employee who has been demoted or is being released, appoint to the board one person nominated by the staff organization to which the employee belongs and one by the Department.

We have no doubt whatsoever that this is the best procedure in such cases. A demotion, and especially a dismissal, has serious consequences. It seems to be not only reasonable but essential for an employee, who considers himself neither incompetent nor incapable of performing his duties and who wishes to exercise his right of appeal, to have the satisfaction of being judged by at least one of his peers. In any case, if the Civil Service Commission did take such action, its Appeal Boards would, in future, be constituted almost in the same manner as the adjudication boards mentioned in Bill C-170 (Public Service Staff Relations Act).<sup>1/</sup>

With regards to an appeal by an unsuccessful candidate in a promotion competition, the Civil Service Commission could very well follow the same procedure every time the appellant so wishes. Failing this, there should be no objection,

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1/ Section 93.

in principle, to having the staff organization, to which the employee belongs, appoint an observer.<sup>1/</sup>

(2) When the Civil Service Commission decides to reject or modify the recommendations of an Appeal Board in favour of the appellant, it comes to this decision, except under exceptional circumstances, without calling together the interested parties and without hearing them or even inviting them to present their viewpoints.<sup>2/</sup>

This procedure is all the more surprising since, in most cases, the Civil Service Commission does not have a complete transcript of the evidence.

Such a procedure should not be followed under any circumstances. The difficulties and expenses involved in such a review must give way to such a basic principle of justice. Otherwise, it might be better to grant Appeal Boards final jurisdiction.

(3) The Civil Service Act authorizes the Civil Service Commission, before coming to a decision, to obtain all additional information it requires.

We are not questioning this right but we do not think that it should exercise it without the interested parties being informed and being allowed to express their opinion.

(4) We were told that some Appeal Boards do not allow the employee's representative to examine the personal file of the employee.

We consider this attitude unacceptable. If an employee decides to request the help of any person to investigate and hear his appeal, surely this

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1/ The presence of an observer would serve to reassure both the appellant and the staff organization and would probably put an end to criticism against the partiality of the Appeal Boards.

2/ Obviously, there have been no complaints about decisions where the Commission mitigates these recommendations in favour of the appellant.

decision implies that this employee authorizes, tacitly at least, his representative to examine the contents of his personal file.

(5) Section 49 of the Civil Service Act does not allow a new employee on probation to appeal against the decision of a deputy head to reject him. We think that in the case of rejection, there is no justification for such a distinction between a full-time employee and a new employee on probation.

WE RECOMMEND:

133. That, when a postal employee who is demoted or dismissed submits an appeal, the Civil Service Commission appoint to the Appeal Board one person nominated by the staff organization to which the employee belongs and one by the Department.
134. That the same procedure apply in an appeal by a candidate not promoted, every time an employee so requests or, failing this, that the Civil Service Commission agree to the presence of an observer selected by such an organization as long as there is no objection from the appellant.
135. That, in future, the Civil Service Commission should not decide to reject or amend the recommendations made by an Appeal Board without inviting the interested parties, including the Department, to submit their viewpoints, and without hearing them, unless they themselves decline to do so.
136. That a person selected by the employee to represent him before an Appeal Board be allowed to examine the personal file of this employee.
137. That section 49 of the Civil Service Act or section 28(3) of Bill C-181 (if necessary) be amended to allow a new employee on probation to appeal against the decision of a deputy head to reject him.

## CHAPTER 19

### INVESTIGATIONS

The Post Office Act<sup>1/</sup> provides that "The Postmaster General may at any time designate an officer employed in the Canada Post Office to investigate and report upon the state and management of the business, or any part of the business, of the Canada Post Office, and the conduct of any postal employee or mail contractor as far as it relates to his official duties".

Accordingly the Department has established a full-time investigation service, as it had the right to do. In some localities, however, the ways and methods of some investigators were criticized. It was alleged that threats or promises are made to obtain oral or written statements from employees.

Headquarters denied these allegations and claimed to know nothing of such incidents. We could not spare the time to investigate each one of them.

Headquarters made available a "Manual of Information for Investigators". Having perused it we must admit, in all fairness, that the Department was careful in taking the necessary precautions when writing its directives for investigators. Hence we must conclude that any abuse is caused by a few over-zealous investigators against whom, we are convinced, Headquarters would not have hesitated to deal severely if they had become aware of the situation and had been provided with sufficient evidence. Our recommendation below will help to obtain such evidence, should it become necessary.

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<sup>1/</sup> Section 46.

Headquarters must attach great importance to the possible consequences of the conduct of its investigators. The latter work generally under tension and the least blunder may well create a feeling of fear, dissatisfaction or, even worse, resentment. Such an atmosphere, once created, may remain for a long time and, rightly or wrongly, may grow worse and permeate to other matters unrelated to investigation.

But this is not our sole concern. We are also interested in the case of the employee who commits or is suspected of having committed an act which, under the Criminal Code or the Post Office Act, constitutes "an indictable offence" or "an offence" which makes him liable, upon conviction, to imprisonment or to a fine or to both, leading generally to the dismissal of the employee.

After all, when the departmental investigators are interrogating an employee they do not know at that time whether the offence he is suspected of will warrant dismissal or a complaint before the court.

WE RECOMMEND:

138. That, in future, any postal employee being interrogated by one or more departmental investigators be entitled to demand the presence either of a representative of the staff organization of which he is a member or of a lawyer.

## CHAPTER 20

### OBSERVATION GALLERIES

Observation galleries are part of the construction of almost all Staff Post Offices. It is possible that, in future, they will be included only in post offices with a proposed minimum establishment of 20 employees.

Although the Department recognizes that the majority of employees are honest, it maintains that these galleries provide the only effective means of control in exceptional cases where a postal employee is suspected of committing or of having committed one or more acts endangering the security of the mail.

The Department insists that the galleries serve only this one single purpose, stating that they are used only by its investigators in the performance of their official duties. No postmaster or any member of his staff has the right, under any circumstances, to use these galleries to supervise employees or to check their work or conduct.

Nevertheless, several employees have strongly objected to these galleries, some because the galleries seem to be opposed to the natural respect for human freedom and dignity or because, by their very existence, they create a feeling of fear or suspicion; others because they do not believe that Headquarters' instructions on restricted use of the galleries are observed.

Even if it is true that these galleries are most objectionable at first sight, we must admit that they are being used in the United States, England, Australia, and elsewhere. No one seems to have been able to devise or work out a more adequate method of control.

We should mention that the Department experimented with closed circuit television in Peterborough, Ont., but this system was not found satisfactory from either standpoint of investigation or operation.

Consequently we do not believe we should intervene.

Perhaps the Department might consider the construction of observation galleries in the future only in post offices with a proposed establishment of non-supervisory operating staff of approximately 50 employees rather than a minimum of 20 as proposed.

WE RECOMMEND:

139. That the Department issue further instructions emphasizing the restricted use of the observation galleries.

We suggest that the Department notify postmasters that they will be subject to disciplinary action if they do not comply with these instructions or if they tolerate anyone under their jurisdiction to contravene them.

## CHAPTER 21

### POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

Section 61 of the Civil Service Act forbids any person employed in the Civil Service to engage in "partisan work in connection with any election for the election of a member of the House of Commons, a member of the legislature of a province or a member of the Council of the Yukon Territory or the Northwest Territories".

Any person who violates this provision is subject to dismissal.

Postal employees claim that this restriction is unreasonable and contrary to the freedom of opinion and expression recognized in Canada, even if it is true that this restriction applies only during election time.

It is not our responsibility to discuss this question except as it applies to the non-supervisory operating staff in the Post Office Department.

These employees are in no way concerned with the development of major departmental policies and their work has no political connotation. Moreover, the distinction made between what is not allowed during an election period and what seems to be tolerated at other times appears vague and unacceptable. To the best of our knowledge at least one province to date, namely Saskatchewan, has abolished, with a few exceptions, all restrictions on "partisan work" by its employees.<sup>1/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> This also seems to be the case in the United Kingdom.

Section 61 also decrees that a civil servant cannot "contribute, receive or in any way deal with any money for the funds of any political party".<sup>1/</sup>

WE RECOMMEND:

140. That, by means of one or more amendments, Parliament grant non-supervisory operating employees in the Post Office Department the right to engage in "partisan work" in connection with any party or to engage in work for or against a candidate (or on his own behalf) for election as a member of the House of Commons, a member of the legislature of a province or a member of the Council of the Yukon or the Northwest Territories, all these activities taking place, of course, outside the employees' working hours.

141. That, by one or more amendments, Parliament allow these same employees, during their off duty hours, to contribute, receive or in any way deal with any money for the funds of a candidate or of any political party.

Logically, following these recommendations we have to consider another request made by postal employees: their eligibility to the House of Commons.

The Canada Elections Act debars every person accepting or holding any employment, permanent or temporary, in the service of the Government of Canada, to which any salary, wages, or emolument is attached, from standing as a candidate in a federal election.<sup>2/</sup>

In the case in question and for reasons already stated, this provision seems too restrictive. We fail to see how the interests of the postal service would be endangered if a few postal employees stood as candidates in an election.

It should be pointed out that the Civil Service Regulations authorize a deputy head to grant to an employee, seeking election to a full-time municipal office, leave without pay for a period of thirty days and, if elected, leave without pay for the term of office.<sup>3/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> These two provisions, expressed in different but more precise terms, are also found in Bill C-181. (Public Service Employment Act), section 32.

<sup>2/</sup> R.S. 1960, c 39, section 20 (1) (f).

<sup>3/</sup> Section 71.

Acting as a member of the House of Commons or of a provincial legislative assembly deserves even more consideration than acting as a civic official even if we have to recognize that, once elected, a postal employee has to resign.

WE RECOMMEND:

142. That, by means of one or more amendments, Parliament grant the non-supervisory operating staff in the Post Office Department the right to stand as candidates in federal elections (general or by-elections) or in provincial elections (general or by-elections).
143. That in order to run as a candidate and during the election itself, any non-supervisory operating employee be entitled to leave without pay for a reasonable length of time, with due consideration being given to the geographical location of the electoral riding in which he wishes to be a candidate.
144. That if this employee fails to be selected as a candidate or fails to get elected, he be allowed, during the following eight days, to be reinstated without losing any of his rights or privileges as a civil servant.
145. That if elected, he be required to resign immediately.

These last recommendations do not go much further than the privileges already granted government employees of the provinces of Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan.

## CHAPTER 22

### TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Almost everywhere, employees mentioned the need for a better training and development program not only for themselves but also for supervisory personnel.

Evidently insufficient on-the-job induction training by specialists can seriously affect

- a) the quality and quantity of output,
- b) labour mobility,
- c) morale,<sup>1/</sup>
- d) the incidence of accidents, and
- e) the number of grievances.

The 1964-1965 budget provided a total of \$243,600 for expenditures in the training and development field, e.g., salaries, travel expenses for courses and conferences, equipment, instructions, etc., and all but \$16,500 was used. In 1965-1966 the sum of \$109,298 was left unspent out of a total authorized budget of \$398,575. We feel this is a very small proportion of the total budget of such a large Department.<sup>2/</sup>

The Department, while admitting that there were many gaps to be filled, thought it should outline to the Commission its past activities in this field, the difficulties encountered, and its future plans.

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<sup>1/</sup> The more inexperienced or poorly trained an employee, the greater the risk of his becoming a burden to his fellow-workers either because of his frequent mistakes or because of the lost time.

<sup>2/</sup> Total budget for 1965-66 was \$279 million.

We would be remiss in our duty if we did not attempt to summarize the departmental position. At the same time, this will provide information for employees who obviously know very little of the policies of their employer in this field.

(1) From 1946 to 1956, the Post Office Department, as in many other departments and in industry in general, concentrated on a series of training courses called "J courses": Job Instruction, Job Methods, Job Relations, Job Safety and other "composite" programs such as daily work simplification. These courses had already proved their usefulness and had been effective in the rapid training of large numbers of workers who were employed, on rather short notice, in every type of industry connected with the war effort.

More than one supervisor took these courses and became initiated in instructional methods adapted to the postal service, work simplification methods and even basic techniques of man management. The Department claims that it has been just as eager to keep up with the progress made in the fields of behavioural and social sciences and that it has been attempting to determine the factors which will best motivate the employees and encourage them to improve their knowledge.

(2) Sometime later (1959 to 1961), while still proceeding cautiously, the Department included some new teaching methods in its training program on "Management Skills", e.g., case studies, role-playing exercises, simulations, etc. These more advanced courses were given in only four large districts and only to middle management and some personnel officers. They were aimed mainly at creating an environment which would facilitate experimentation and the testing of new behavioural patterns and new methods of motivation in concrete situations.

(3) However, the Department quickly realized that without highly skilled, professional training staff and without the essential equipment, both at

Headquarters and in the field, these methods and new training techniques could not be applied effectively.

The Department began by raising its selection standards for the recruitment of staff training officers. It hopes to attract experienced and competent people with a university background. In regard to its present training staff, it has tried to advance those who seem best qualified to a level where they can successfully use modern training material, contribute to research, and carry out programs of manpower and organization planning, as well as employee evaluation, development and training.

The Department is not deceiving itself. The task it has undertaken is not easy. The Post Office, like several other departments and a good part of industry, is at the moment experiencing the after-effects of a serious lack of professionally qualified training specialists. This shortage is largely the result of the spectacular progress caused by the behavioural and social sciences in the field of education and training. Neither the educational systems, as a whole, nor the careers offered in the Civil Service, until now, have proved interesting enough to entice a sufficient number of candidates to train for this profession or to attract many people with the required basic education and qualifications.

The Department hopes that the new plan adopted by the Civil Service Commission, for the classification of Personnel Administrators, will overcome these difficulties and will attract enough specialists to be able to put its plans into effect.

Such is the long-term plan of the Department. It appears to be interesting and valid.

WE RECOMMEND:

146. That the Department make every possible effort to obtain the qualified staff required to carry out its training and development program.

Meanwhile, the Department is faced with urgent requirements. We will mention only some of the most important ones and make a few recommendations.

(1) A local inquiry into the actions and conduct of some supervisors is necessary in several post offices. The employees, as we have already said, complained on many occasions of their arrogant attitude and their prejudices. Some postmasters appear not to have paid attention to this problem.<sup>1/</sup>

WE RECOMMEND:

147. That local joint committees be entitled to submit for study and consideration all problems that may be created by the actions, behaviour or attitude of the supervisors.

148. That top priority be given to courses in human relations for supervisors.

(2) The Department can more readily meet the need for technical training of mail sorters. This requires on the part of the training staff a sound background and teaching ability. There are now sorting schools in all major post offices. The Department intends to provide, before the end of the fiscal year 1966-1967, the same training in staff post offices of all levels.

(3) The induction and follow-up training of new employees was mentioned quite often.

In future, the Department will rely on the training services provided for in its new program. Until then, the Department intends to maintain its specialized schools in localities where they are at present<sup>2/</sup> and to continue at

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1/ In October 1965, the Department published a manual on supervisory training dealing mostly with the nature and character of human relations which should exist between supervisors and employees.

2/ The Department claims that, because of these specialized schools, it has succeeded in reducing substantially the time required to train new employees and in obtaining a better output in a much shorter time.

other locations to call on supervisors to give newcomers on-the-job training.

To help the newcomers and to make them aware of their rights, obligations, and privileges, the Department now provides them with two booklets: "You and the Postal Service" and "Your Superannuation Plan".<sup>1/</sup> Letter carriers receive a "Manual of Instructions" as well. In the major post offices, it has become the custom to call a meeting of employees to discuss the contents of these booklets. The lack of training staff, however, has prevented holding such sessions immediately after the employee has joined the service. With more training staff and better equipment, the Department hopes to do much better. Its new program provides for official induction courses and technical training for all newcomers for as long as it is necessary to ensure that they become efficient. With this object in mind, the Department intends to assign a full-time instructor to each staff post office.

(4) In all large enterprises one is concerned with the problems of rotation of staff within or between sections. The Department claims this is also the case in the Post Office.

In small offices job rotation is the rule. This is essential since the small number of employees must carry out all duties.

In larger offices, rotation presents difficulties because of the extensive specialized knowledge required in the city and forward mail sections. The period of apprenticeship to reach an acceptable standard of productivity limits this rotation to large distribution zones. In these offices, moreover, employment as wicket clerks and directory clerks, etc., is considered a "preferred assignment" and is open to bidding on the basis of seniority. This can only detract from a well organized rotation program.

The Department assured our Commission that it wants to further strengthen its rotation policy to meet the needs of staff mobility and to give the employees

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<sup>1/</sup> We are surprised that many employees claimed they had never even seen those booklets.

greater experience. It cannot achieve this objective, however, without the co-operation of the staff organizations which, if they are to accede to the suggestions of a good number of employees, will have to be more flexible regarding seniority rules in respect to "preferred assignments".

Nevertheless, we are concerned with one aspect.

Several factors are taken into consideration in a rotation program. Having told employees of its intention to strengthen its rotation policy, while modifying it slightly with the agreement of the staff organizations, the Department should ask those who have the desire and ambition to improve themselves to place their names on a special list. Without disregarding completely the merit principle, the Department would have a wider choice and the employees would also have the benefit of an excellent incentive.

WE RECOMMEND:

149. That the Department revise its selection practices in the rotation of staff within the same section or between sections after consultation at the national joint committee level.

(5) The Department has initiated an appraisal program for employees at all levels. One of the aims of this program is to allow the Department to identify the most promising employees. Circumstances have prevented the Department, until now, from extending this program to non-supervisory operating personnel.

WE RECOMMEND:

150. That the appraisal and performance review program instituted by the Department be applied, as soon as possible, to non-supervisory operating personnel to identify their true potential and to meet their training and production needs.

(6) In larger post offices, where mailhandling is done through the extensive use of mechanical equipment (conveyor belts, deflectors, parcel sorting

machines, etc.), employees concerned receive special training on the current methods developed by the Methods and Standards Division, and so learn to make the most effective use of this equipment.

(7) French language courses came up for discussion.

The Civil Service Commission has determined the general criteria, which are summarized as follows:

There are no restrictions as to who may attend these courses except that preference will be given to Senior Officers, officers in key positions, personnel in clerical positions who have an actual need for this type of training, personnel who have already followed a concentrated language course and who should keep alive and increase their knowledge of the French language, and finally personnel whose ear is not tuned to oral French but who have an acceptable level of reading comprehension, and who are thus on the threshold of becoming bilingual.

The Department adheres to these criteria in recommending French language courses for its Headquarters staff in Ottawa. As the Civil Service Commission extends these courses to other centres, the Department intends to follow suit. Most offices have enough space and the necessary equipment (blackboards, conference room, furniture, etc.). Overhead and movie projectors are available within the Department and other equipment can be obtained if needed.

(8) Some postal clerks asked that a manual be prepared exclusively for their use. The Department states that, unlike the letter carrier's, the duties of a postal clerk are not always the same and vary from one area to another. Nevertheless, we feel that such a manual would be of benefit to the Department. Some basic duties do not change and policies or basic rules hardly ever change.

WE RECOMMEND:

151. That the Department prepare a loose leaf induction kit for its employees setting out their main conditions of employment as well as their duties and responsibilities.
152. That this kit be kept up to date.

## CHAPTER 23

### DIRECTIVES AND INSTRUCTIONS

The field operating services of the Department can function effectively only through the publication of many different regulations, directives and instructions.

There were two recurring complaints:

- a) the difficulty of understanding them, and
- b) their wrong or contradictory interpretations.

(1) The Department rightly maintains that an organization such as the Post Office, guided by a progressive decentralization policy, cannot avoid all differences of interpretation or of application of its large number of rules and regulations. This is obviously not possible nor desirable. If the Department always issued precise instructions about the smallest details of its policies or procedures, there would be little room left for adaptation to local conditions. Our Inquiry has proved the need for such flexibility in each district. District directors, postmasters and all others in authority in the field operating services should be given the opportunity to exercise their autonomy, initiative, and common sense. Nothing will be gained from a lack of flexibility.

Nevertheless, greater accuracy is essential if the Department wants to prevent its regulations from becoming completely unintelligible. As a matter of fact, it is aware of this problem and is doing something about it. A Directives Management Unit has been established to ensure uniformity of

style and content in its regulations, directives and instructions and to see that they are issued in a standard format with an appropriate reference index.

For the time being, Headquarters officials and Quality Control Division representatives check the interpretation and application of instructions, during their on-the-spot inspections. It seems that Headquarters wants to correct, as soon as possible, errors or misinterpretations which are brought to their attention.

In any case, the new grievance procedure will undoubtedly put an end to the difficulties and troubles of the past, especially if the Department agrees to our recommendation to consider referring to final and compulsory arbitration any disagreement about the interpretation or application of its regulations.<sup>1/</sup>

(2) The Department often consults with its district directors and postmasters of post offices class 17, 18 and 19 before amending procedures or revising its work methods. This is done by correspondence or by personal visits. It holds an annual conference in Ottawa for the most senior field representatives. During these meetings, there is a complete review of the main problems facing the Department. The Department also states district directors discuss with the postmasters in their respective areas all regulations, directives or instructions which are of interest to them and proposed amendments to existing policies.

We support this policy.

As already mentioned, we would like the Department to go one step further and agree to consult, in future, with the national leaders of the staff organizations before enforcing regulations, directives or instructions affecting the employees' working conditions.<sup>2/</sup>

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1/ See Chapter 17, "Grievance Procedure".

2/ See Chapter 6, "Consultation".

(3) In many places, employees criticized the expression "at the discretion of the postmaster" used in departmental directives and in the Personnel Manual. They consider it has a demoralizing effect because it allows the postmaster too much freedom of action.

We did study each directive or article in the Personnel Manual where this expression is used. Perhaps it is unnecessary in some cases but we cannot see it deleted entirely without creating much more complex problems. For example, when there is an exceptionally heavy snow storm, who will decide that the letter carriers will not deliver the mail if the postmaster does not have complete discretion? Or again who would have the last word about the type and extent of the postal service required on a statutory holiday in a particular locality? After all, there comes a time when someone in authority must make a final decision.

(4) On the other hand, some employees suggested that directives from Headquarters be rewritten or revised by the district directors, bearing in mind their adaptation and application to local or regional conditions. The Department states that district directors have full authority to interpret directives or issue new ones according to the particular requirements of their district providing they do not lose sight of the basic intent.

(5) A few local branches requested that the Post Office Act (1951) be brought up to date in line with recent changes.

This Act has been amended several times since 1951 and continues to be reviewed periodically. As the responsibility for amending the Act rests with Parliament, we suggest that the staff organizations specify what amendments they consider desirable so that the Department may study them and advise the appropriate authorities.

(6) Other branches complained that they do not have a copy of the Personnel Manual at their disposal.

The Department believes that it has satisfied all requests received.

The national officers of the staff organizations and the representatives of local branches have at least one copy each and receive all amendments regularly. The Department states it is ready to consider any other requests and distribute more copies within reason.

(7) Employees claim that not all postal officers are sufficiently conversant with the contents of the Personnel Manual and the Manual of Operating Procedures.

The Department considers that much of the contents of these manuals is devoted to details of procedure of interest only to personnel specialists and section heads directly involved in the operating services. A profound knowledge of these manuals cannot be expected from all postal officers. The Department prefers to have these manuals always available to these officers for consultation, as the need arises.

The Department should remind those officials of their responsibilities when their duties require them to have a good knowledge of the contents of either one of these manuals. It would not be realistic to ask for more.

(8) Some wicket clerks insisted that, in each post office, there should be two manuals on the handling of registered mail: one containing the general instructions of the Department and the other precise local instructions on the method for dealing with registered mail and its handling locally.

The Department has no objection but leaves this initiative to the postmasters who may after consultation decide what action to take on the basis of local requirements.

(9) Some letter carriers complained that they are sometimes required to provide catalogue mailers with up-to-date listings of patrons' addresses - and this, they say, contrary to regulations.<sup>1/</sup>

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1/ Post Office Department, Manual of Instructions to Letter Carriers, Book 8, section 83.

The Department states that this regulation applies to cases where private individuals or bill collectors ask for information of a confidential nature. It does not, in any way, forbid letter carriers to provide these listings to firms wanting to distribute their catalogues. The Department believes this service is useful from the point of view of the patrons, the Department, and the letter carriers themselves who help provide this service.

(10) Some letter carriers alleged that, on appointment, they are given only two days, at the most, to read their Manual of Instructions.

Although the letter carrier must sign a declaration that he has received, read carefully, and understood these instructions, the Department points out that he is always free to review, with his supervisor, any part of the manual which he does not understand. As a further precaution, the postmaster or his representative must sign a declaration stating that he has discussed the instructions with the letter carrier and is satisfied that the latter is conversant with the contents of the manual. The Department has never required that all instructions be understood in two days.

(11) The railway mail clerks asked that their 1955 Manual of Instructions be brought up to date. Although admitting that the latest edition dates back to 1955, the Department has not considered it necessary to publish a new edition in view of the small number of amendments involved. It is now studying the possibility of publishing a new one shortly.

WE RECOMMEND:

153. That the Department use its Directives Management Unit to ensure that its regulations, directives, and instructions are complete, easy to understand and accompanied by an index with appropriate references.
154. That the Department consult with the national joint committees before issuing or amending regulations affecting the employees' conditions of work.
155. That the staff organizations make specific recommendations about the sections of the Post Office Act, the manuals, the regulations, the directives, or instructions which, in their opinion, should be amended or clarified.

## CHAPTER 24

### ENVIRONMENTAL AND PHYSICAL WORKING CONDITIONS

#### 1. General

This chapter deals with a problem of paramount importance. Its solution is both difficult and complex.

Most of the representatives from local branches submitted grievances covering many different aspects of environmental and physical working conditions in offices where the employees carry out their duties.

On the whole, these grievances are related to matters of health, hygiene, safety or welfare. These can be considered as "perennial" grievances: the employee who hates the room where he eats his meal, because he finds it either too small, uncomfortable or even dirty, "rediscovers" it day in and day out, as long as nothing is done to correct what he, rightly or wrongly, considers shocking, rediscovered his dissatisfaction ... and his grievance. Inevitably several of these grievances are subjective in character. It happens that an employee or a group of employees complain about certain conditions while another employee or a group of employees may be completely unconcerned. The diversity of impressions or opinions taken separately only increases the number of grievances.

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1/ The word "offices" includes large and small staff post offices, postal stations and even railway mail cars.

2/ Details are given in different sections of this chapter.

3/ We deliberately chose a simple example. The association of an employee's grievance with his daily work remains, be it a lack of ventilation, defective lighting, inadequate heating, an accident hazard, a lavatory out of order, etc.

It goes without saying that the Department is concerned over this flood of complaints. It appreciates that they affect the morale and behaviour of the employees and that it runs the risk of a deterioration in its relations with the staff organizations. Aware of its responsibilities, the Department knows that it is facing difficulties which, if they persist, can only reduce the efficiency of the postal service.

But there are complications.

To have a better understanding of all the implications we have grouped these problems under three headings:

- (1) Standards of environmental and physical working conditions.
- (2) The implementation of these standards.
- (3) The division of authority and responsibilities between the Post Office and the Department of Public Works.

1/

#### Standards of environmental and physical working conditions

There are at present a certain number of rules and standards governing design, maintenance and use of accommodation for civil servants. They cover a very wide range of subjects including security and safety, sanitary facilities, the cleanliness of the place of work, the comfort and welfare of the employees, etc. These rules and standards, obviously, apply to the Post Office Department and employees have a right to expect that they will be complied with in their case as for all other civil servants.

In developing these standards, it was necessary to call on the knowledge of experts and the experience of many agencies. Thus, standards laid down in the

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1/ We do not claim to have covered all problems under these three headings. We are mentioning only the essential ones.

National Building Code govern both the design and construction of new buildings as well as the renovation of existing ones. Lighting is as recommended by the Society of Illuminating Engineers. The Dominion Fire Commissioner is responsible for directives intended for the protection of employees and buildings against fire. The Occupational Health Division of the Department of National Health and Welfare looks after every item which may affect the health of civil servants while at work. The Department of Public Works lays down the policies regarding maintenance, cleaning, etc.

We do not have to assess the intrinsic value of these rules and standards. However, we are surprised that, until now, the Government has not seen fit to have them completely written up and codified.

A committee of the National Joint Council, which includes official representatives of various civil service associations, thoroughly studied this problem and has submitted to the Government a report containing specific recommendations for improving present standards. We trust that the Government will act on these recommendations very soon.

For its part, the Department of Public Works is now preparing a manual of standards governing physical working conditions. This manual will be published in sections and will be made available not only to departmental administrators concerned but also to the representatives of the civil service staff associations and unions.

It is also intended to form a committee to advise Treasury Board in this particular field. This committee will be composed of representatives from Treasury Board, the Department of Public Works, the Department of National Health and Welfare, the Department of Labour, and a few others.

Finally we have Bill S-35 (Canada Labour Safety Code) on work safety which contains several encouraging provisions, such as section 7 allowing the

Governor in Council to make "regulations for the safety and health of persons employed upon or in connection with the operation of any federal work, undertaking or business".

These certainly are steps in the right direction. All these measures, if well co-ordinated, can only improve the lot of civil servants as a whole and Post Office employees in particular.

#### The implementation of standards

It appears evident that the implementation of the present standards has often left much to be desired.

If the number of recriminations is to be reduced and relations between the Department and its employees improved, it is, in the first place, necessary to increase the participation of employees in the maintenance of adequate physical and environmental working conditions in each staff post office. The Department has everything to gain in inviting its employees, through their representatives, to play an active role in this matter. This is the basic reason for many of the recommendations we make further on and which are related to those in Chapter 6 of our Report.

It seems to us that the most promising solution is to set up local joint committees where the employer and employees meet at regular intervals to discuss

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1/ This section includes some interesting details. Besides the possibility of a regulation for the provision of safety measures in the operation or use of machinery, equipment, materials, etc., it gives authority to the Governor in Council to make regulations respecting (a) the use, operation and maintenance of escalators, elevators and other devices for moving passengers or freight; (b) the ventilation, lighting and temperature of places of employment and prescribing the minimum amount of space for employees; (c) the provision and maintenance of potable water supplies and of sanitary and other facilities for the well-being of employees; (d) the handling, transportation, storage and use of substances or devices dangerous to the safety or health of employees; (e) the protection of employees from fire and explosion; (f) the reporting and investigation of accidents and hazards; (g) the adoption and implementation of appropriate safety codes, etc.

2/ Chapter 6, "Consultation".

problems of health, hygiene, safety or welfare in their particular post office. It will facilitate discussion on an equal footing and will help employees to know and understand, if not accept, certain inherent difficulties in the established system. These committees will study rules and standards and see that they are implemented. They will bring pressure to bear on the implementation of their recommendations. If necessary, they will be able to refer some of these recommendations to the national level and thus bring about worthwhile modifications.

We cannot overemphasize our confidence in the success of such a formula, providing - and we repeat this - that both parties exercise a spirit of complete co-operation.

Here again, Bill S-35 (Canada Labour Safety Code) may prove very beneficial. It provides a new and important element: that of an effective control on the implementation of the regulations on safety, health and others which will be approved by the Governor in Council. Section 10 of this Bill anticipates the appointment of regional safety officers with very wide powers, e.g., the authority to make inspections, enquiries or on the spot investigations to ensure that the regulations are followed and, where necessary, to institute proceedings. As soon as this Bill has been approved and the Governor in Council has promulgated the appropriate regulations and has appointed safety officers, post office employees will be able to turn to someone in authority to investigate, on the spot, most of the physical and environmental working conditions.

#### The division of authority and responsibilities

The division of authority and of some responsibilities between the Post Office and some other departments and, more particularly, the Department of Public Works, also gives rise to difficulties. We give examples further on.

Let us point out for now that the three main agencies concerned, i.e., the Post Office, the Department of Public Works, and Treasury Board, recently decided

to undertake a detailed study of ways and means to delegate to the Department further authority regarding new construction and the maintenance of the post offices, and for equipment and furniture.

Furthermore, the Department of Public Works has just undertaken a large-scale decentralization program so that it will be a "service" agency rather than a controlling body as before. This change of policy should bring about excellent results and put an end to a good number of grievances. In time, the employees of the post office will cease to have the feeling that the Department to which they belong and which has sole jurisdiction over them is not capable of resolving all their difficulties.

Let us consider now in the various sections of this chapter each of the main specific problems employees have raised.

## 2. Accidents

Of all the Government departments, boards or crown agencies, the Post Office Department ranks next to the Department of National Defence in having the <sup>1/</sup> highest number of accidents at work.

During the fiscal year 1964-1965, the Post Office Department recorded 1,928 accidents which were termed minor and 1,983 which caused employees disability of different degrees of seriousness and duration. The claims settled during these <sup>2/</sup> 12 months totalled 3,990 at the cost of \$542,000.00.

(1) We were astonished at the ignorance and uncertainty of employees concerning their rights and privileges when an accident occurs at work.

The Department intends to distribute, as soon as possible, an explanatory <sup>3/</sup> pamphlet giving information about the Government Employees Compensation Act and

1/ The frequency rate per million man-hour is higher in the Post Office Department. According to the most recent statistics, this rate was 36.87% whereas in the Department of National Defence (Air) it was 24.58%.

2/ A little more than 65% of the accidents happened to letter carriers.

3/ R.S., 1952, c. 134, as amended.

the Workmen's Compensation Act of the province in which they are employed.

We presume that this pamphlet will refer to section 77 of the Civil Service Regulations which allows an employee, injured in the performance of his duties or suffering from an illness resulting from the nature of his employment, to obtain special leave (quite apart from sick leave) at full salary for the duration of his total disability. Thus, a civil servant receives more compensation than he could receive under provincial legislation.

WE RECOMMEND:

156.

That the Department supply its employees with all information necessary to enable them to understand clearly the rights and privileges they may exercise and the claims they may make in cases of accidents on duty; this information to take into account the Government Employees Compensation Act and the Civil Service Regulations as well as the Workmen's Compensation Act of the province in which they are employed.

(2) Employees state that the Department gives them a copy of the accident report only on request to the postmaster.

The Department claims that this practice is satisfactory. We do not agree. We believe that an employee who has been the victim of an accident is entitled to receive all information which may help him, at any time, to present his claim.

WE RECOMMEND:

157.

That, automatically, and without being specifically requested, the Department forward to an employee who has been the victim of an accident, any report which it prepares for the intention of a provincial Workmen's Compensation Board or for the federal Department of Labour.

(3) From time to time the provincial Workmen's Compensation Boards publish notices containing information or advice. These notices are intended to be posted in working establishments.

Until now, the Department has shown very little interest in these notices. It intends to change its attitude and to make greater use of them. It wants also to make better use of the services provided by several of these provincial boards. We discuss this matter again further on in this chapter.

(4) Letter carriers suggested that the Department recognize as occupational or industrial diseases certain illnesses from which many of them suffer, such as intestinal disorders and heart diseases.

Under existing legislation, the Post Office Department does not have the power to decree on its own authority whether any illness belongs to one or the other of these categories. This matter comes under provincial jurisdiction.

It might be possible for letter carriers to have these illnesses or others accepted as "occupational" diseases if they exercise their right referred to in section 7 of the Government Employees Compensation Act which reads as follows:

"The Governor in Council may make regulations prescribing the conditions under which compensation is to be payable, the amount of compensation payable and the manner in which the compensation is to be determined, in respect of any employee who is disabled or whose death is caused by reason of any disease that is not an industrial disease but is due to the nature of his employment and peculiar to or characteristic of the particular process, trade or occupation in which he was employed at the time the disease was contracted, and compensation shall be awarded to such employee or to the dependents of such deceased employee in accordance with the regulations."

Perhaps the letter carriers, if they carry out all the necessary research, will succeed in persuading the Governor in Council to approve the proposed regulation. The Department, on the other hand, might make a study of the occurrence of these illnesses with respect to letter carriers and make the results available to them. Furthermore, without awaiting official representations from the Letter Carriers' Union, it would be desirable if the Department of National Health and Welfare would concern itself with this problem.

We can go no further. Neither our elementary medical knowledge, nor the

somewhat vague information received, allow us to support this suggestion of the letter carriers and to make it a formal recommendation.

### 3. Safety programs

We shall not attempt to list the multitude of complaints on the safety of the staff or on the elimination of accident hazards.

We were not able to check everything but we have to admit that some post offices, postal stations or railway mail cars left rather distressing <sup>1/</sup> impressions. Whatever the reasons may be, the Department - and it must assume this responsibility with respect to its employees - was too often unconcerned if not negligent. The Department recognized its duty to correct several deficiencies. The proposed changes in its safety policy are a good indication.

As a first long-range measure, the Department intends to appoint immediately a safety officer who will have the following duties:

- "1.- To administer, prepare and promote an accident prevention program for the Postal Service;
- 2.- To assess, in co-operation with Headquarters and Field Officers, specific safety training needs in order to prepare appropriate training programs;
- 3.- To prepare appropriate posters, publications and manuals for safety programs;
- 4.- To carry out safety and accident prevention studies in order to submit regular reports on the status of safety by inspecting various existing facilities, by conferences with the District Directors and with the Advisor of the Department of Labour, and by analysis of reports, charts and statistics;
- 5.- To act in an advisory capacity as required on all matters pertaining to safety and to assess new developments in industrial safety procedures particularly as to their applicability to the Department's operations;

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<sup>1/</sup> These impressions do not relate solely to accident hazards. They have several other causes which we shall have the opportunity to discuss in the following sections of this chapter.

- 6.- To maintain the accident record system, by submitting necessary reports, investigating serious accidents, obtaining supervisor's accident reports and checking corrective action taken by supervisors to eliminate accident causes;
- 7.- To maintain liaison with outside professional organizations, Workmen's Compensation Boards and Staff Training Officers in order to exchange information and to keep programs up to date;
- 8.- To develop a preventive safety program by recommending the purchase of proper equipment, establishing most common causes of injuries and taking appropriate actions;
- 9.- To initiate activities that will stimulate and maintain employee interests;
- 10.- To set standards for safety equipment to be used by staff personnel." <sup>1/</sup>

A second measure which the Department intends to take and which has long been delayed despite numerous representations by the Union of Postal Workers refers to the organization and establishment of nursing services and first-aid units in <sup>2/</sup> major staff post offices.

A third measure mentioned by the Department is a study undertaken by the authorities on the adoption of uniform criteria concerning the health and safety of civil servants as a whole. This study has reached the stage of "serious con-<sup>3/</sup>sideration". We believe that they should go beyond this stage now. Postal employees have the right to claim and to obtain the application of standards of health, safety and hygiene similar to those applied in industry.

However, there is a need for even more urgent action.

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- <sup>1/</sup> This text is taken from a letter dated the 29th March, 1966, and forwarded by the Department to the general secretary-treasurer of the Union of Postal Workers.
- <sup>2/</sup> See the next section entitled "First aid and medical facilities".
- <sup>3/</sup> We presume that the regulations provided for in Bill S-35 (Canada Labour ~~Safety~~ Code) will list these criteria.

We are convinced, following our inquiry:

- a) that neither the Department at the Headquarters level, nor some district directors and postmasters know exactly where they stand concerning accident hazards, and moreover,
- b) that even known hazards appear to be here to stay since it takes many days and months before they are rectified and forgotten.

We shall not attempt to apportion responsibilities. The Department is not the only party at fault.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 158. That a thorough survey be made, at once, in every post office, to identify accident hazards of all kinds.
- 159. That this survey be made with the co-operation of local joint committees.
- 160. That for this purpose, Headquarters authorize the postmasters and committees to ask inspectors of provincial Workmen's Compensation Boards or of municipal safety services to make recommendations and that this procedure be followed at least until such time as the Federal Government adopts permanent regulations.
- 161. That this survey, once completed, be forwarded to Headquarters, to district directors and to postmasters in staff post offices, grades 19, 18 and 17.
- 162. That immediate steps be taken to ensure that all accident hazards mentioned in these surveys are eliminated.
- 163. That Headquarters continue to acknowledge the authority of local joint committees in this matter and agree to take their recommendations into consideration.
- 164. That the appropriate authorities, including the Department, carry out, as soon as possible, the basic reforms which the latter proposes adopting in matters of safety and which are mentioned in this Report.
- 165. That the Department, with the co-operation of the Department of National Health and Welfare, make a study of the incidence of heart disease and intestinal disorders among letter carriers and that the results of this study be made available to the Letter Carriers' Union.

166. That a joint committee be established at the request of the above-mentioned Union to determine whether these illnesses or any other illness, considered to occur frequently with letter carriers, have the characteristics of so-called "occupational diseases" and if in the affirmative, that the Governor General in Council intervene and exercise the powers conferred by virtue of section 7 of the Government Employees Compensation Act.

4. First aid and medical facilities

An organization such as the Post Office Department, with so many employees performing tasks which are often tiring and sometimes hazardous, ought to have considered providing its employees with adequate first-aid facilities and good medical care on the premises.

This has not been done.

First aid

(1) Each post office must have suitably equipped kits to provide first aid to any employee who, ill or injured, needs first-aid treatment immediately.

These first-aid kits do exist. Too often however they contain only a bare minimum of medical supplies. The Department claims that medical supplies are provided according to a list established in co-operation with the Department of National Health and Welfare. Obviously in some post offices this list has been misplaced.

(2) In a few post offices a joint committee handles all problems of first aid and medical care. It inspects the contents of the kits at regular intervals and with the co-operation of the postmaster ensures that there is nothing missing. This approach should be adopted by all offices.

(3) The following suggestion could also bring excellent results.

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1/ Some post offices should have more than one kit.

The Department intends to undertake a campaign to encourage a number of its employees to take first-aid courses. We believe it should grant employees special leave with pay, if necessary, to attend such courses and extra pay in return for their services once they have obtained their certificate.

(4) Bill S-35 (Canada Labour Safety Code) stipulates that the Governor in Council be enabled to prescribe, by regulation, the first-aid facilities to be supplied, the first-aid training to be given, and the services to be provided by first-aid attendants.

If the Governor in Council exercises this authority, employees will be able, in future, to request the Minister of Labour to have one of its safety officers make enquiries and take the corrective measures provided for in this Bill.

#### Medical facilities

None of the post offices have health units, but there are so-called "quiet rooms", and, except in a few localities, during the Christmas period employees have no nursing services at their disposal.

Approximately two years ago the Montreal branch of the Union of Postal Workers requested that a health unit be set up in the main post office in that city, that nursing services be available on a full-time basis, and that more names of doctors who are available to handle emergency cases be listed.

The Department referred this request to the appropriate authorities without any concrete results.

The Department recently made further representation and obtained the following:

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1/ Article 7 (n).

2/ Sections 9, 10, 14 and 19.

- a) One full-time nurse for the Montreal post office unit.  
<sup>1/</sup>
- b) A second nurse for part-time work assigned to this same office.  
<sup>2/</sup>
- c) Two additional part-time medical officers available to employees when necessary.

The Department has also prevailed upon the National Health and Welfare Department to include, in its supplementary estimates, one full-time position for a nurse in the Toronto main post office.

Finally, the Department has undertaken:

- a) to study the possibility of establishing a 24-hour nursing service in the main post offices in Montreal and Toronto;
- b) to discuss with the representatives of the Department of National Health and Welfare, and Treasury Board the details of a plan to establish health units in all the other major post offices across the country; and,
- c) to examine, with these same representatives, the need to develop practical standards for establishing nursing services elsewhere while taking into account the implications of setting up round the clock nursing services in offices where there are continuous operations.

The Department informed the Commission of its intention to provide the necessary space for first-aid and nursing-service staff when drawing up the plans  
<sup>3/</sup>for new buildings in major centres.

Therefore, worthwhile progress is being made.

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- 1/ The 1966-1967 estimates of the Department of National Health and Welfare provide for this.
- 2/ The Department states that this part-time nurse will be used on a full-time basis, if warranted.
- 3/ In the proposed Ottawa post office, the Department has set aside a first-aid room on each of the three working floors.

In some of the large post offices in the United States, in addition to nursing services, provision is made for periodical medical examinations, emergency or first-aid treatment, and preventive medicine. The objective of the U.S. Administration is to extend these services gradually to all cities where shifts comprise more than 300 employees at any given time. Perhaps the Department will want to consider such a program.

We note that the appointment of a safety officer at Headquarters, in the near future, will help greatly in ensuring the proper co-ordination of the first-aid and medical services and the safety and accident prevention programs.

WE RECOMMEND:

167. That the Department direct its postmasters to inspect the first-aid kits in their respective post offices.
168. That, whenever these kits do not contain the medical supplies listed by the Department of National Health and Welfare, immediate action be taken to correct the situation.
169. That the local joint committees, with the co-operation of the postmasters, see that the first-aid kits are always stocked with the required medical supplies.
170. That the Department undertake a campaign to encourage a number of its employees to take first-aid courses and that, for this purpose, it grant leave with pay whenever warranted.
171. That employees who have received their first-aid certificates be paid additional remuneration in line with the additional responsibilities assigned to them.
172. That Treasury Board and the Department of National Health and Welfare authorize the Post Office Department to hire one full-time nurse for every post office with an approximate total establishment of 500 employees.
173. That a list of doctors available in an emergency be posted in prominent places.

5. Equipment and supplies

The Department, in accordance with the official line of authority, is responsible for ensuring that equipment and supplies vital to the operation of the postal service are made available to employees.

It identifies the needs of each office and prepares the necessary requisitions keeping in mind the need to be reasonably economical.

Through directives, circulars and catalogues, Headquarters keeps district directors, postmasters and officers in the field operating services up to date on the various articles available. It operates a central depot in Ottawa and claims to meet quickly all legitimate requests. We have perused its directives and catalogues. They appear satisfactory.

One category of equipment and supplies, required by post offices and its employees, is not provided by the Department because it does not have the authority, e.g., furniture and standard furnishings, fans, fire extinguishers, fire hoses, etc. This is the responsibility of the Department of Public Works<sup>1/</sup> and the Department hastens to mention that it had always been able to count on its assistance.

Finally, there is the problem of maintaining and repairing equipment and supplies.

In the larger post offices the Department hires staff to perform these duties, but these employees look only after equipment and supplies which are peculiar to the postal service. In smaller post offices repairs are "contracted out". Until recently the maintenance and repair of other categories of equipment and supplies was the responsibility of the Department of Public Works.

We shall not attempt to deal with every one of the innumerable complaints from employees. A few examples will be sufficient: antiquated cabinets, chairs and tables, binneys in poor repair, worn out cancelling machines, metal tables with no protective edge, conveyors not equipped with dust filters, lack of indexed stamp books, shortage of pencils and scissors, fans out of order, fire extinguishers in bad operating condition, and ever so many other complaints.

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- 1/ The Department takes stock of its equipment and supplies once a year during May and June.
- 2/ Recently, the responsibility for office furniture and supplies was transferred to the Department of Defence Production.

We were able to see for ourselves that several complaints were well founded. There is no doubt that problems do exist.

These problems arise either because of a lack of attention or inspection at the local level, or from the lack of concern of some postmasters or both. They may also arise because of a lack of real co-operation or an absence of co-ordination between the Post Office Department and the Department of Public Works.

A good number of these problems would be resolved more easily if greater authority were granted to the Department for the general maintenance of post offices and for minor repairs and if the district engineers of the Department of Public Works had more latitude in both the management and financial fields.<sup>1/</sup>

There are some district directors and postmasters, possibly with more initiative and aggressiveness than others, who have no serious difficulties in keeping their post offices in good order. They manage to obtain, because of their persistence, just about everything they need from the Department of Public Works' representatives. On the other hand, there are others, either because they do not understand or do not want to understand the importance of the problem, or because they give up after one or two attempts and let things drag, who only add more weight to the employees' demands.

In many localities employees mentioned the representations they had made, without success, to obtain furniture and supplies which they thought were essential, e.g., window screens or deflectors, ventilating units, refrigerated water fountains, etc.

One will appreciate that our Commission cannot rule on the merit of each case. All interested parties together should study these carefully and the Department, on the basis of the recommendations received, should either correct the situation or take the necessary steps to have them corrected.

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<sup>1/</sup> We understand that such is now the policy of the Department of Public Works.

WE RECOMMEND:

174. That Headquarters remind all concerned that there are sufficient equipment and supplies and that the maintenance or replacement of worn-out items should not be neglected.
175. That the Department supply the staff organizations with catalogues and scales of issue of supplies to enable them to keep their local representatives well posted.
176. That, in every post office, through local joint committees an inventory be carried out concerning the condition of the equipment and supplies on hand and the need to obtain furniture, equipment, supplies or other accessories.
177. That postmasters and district directors immediately take the necessary steps to correct the deficiencies identified through this inventory.
178. That more authority be delegated to district directors and postmasters concerning maintenance, minor repairs and renovations of post offices.
179. That, wherever necessary, a better co-ordination be sought, between the Post Office Department and other departments responsible for maintenance, to obtain more expeditious service.

We heard a few other grievances.

(1) The most important one received some publicity: the sorting stools.

At the outset of our inquiry, Headquarters changed its policy on the use of stools. Dissatisfaction remains for two reasons: the interpretation given in different places to the new policy and the lack of comfort of the stools.

The actual use of sorting stools is a personal matter. Some may very well not want to use them and remain standing, others may prefer to sit down from time to time. The Department should leave mail sorters completely free to use the stools. If there are abuses which affect their normal performance, the Department will then have to deal with individual cases only.

It is quite evident that the stools are not comfortable. This is the main reason why some sorters seldom make use of them. It would be interesting to

see if a stool with a swivel chair, back and foot rests and easily adjustable as to height would not be more suitable.

(2) To ease the strain of sorters it would be advisable to cover the floor in front of the sorting cases with a rubber mat or other acceptable material.

(3) In nearly all post offices there is a lunch room, a cafeteria or a place where employees may eat or have coffee, tea, hot chocolate or some other beverage. In some of these rooms there are no electrical appliances available for making drinks during the evening or night shifts.

The Department could easily correct this deficiency if it were to install on each floor, where the number of employees so warrants, hot-plates or automatic dispensers, and benches and counters along the side of the wall.

WE RECOMMEND:

180. That Headquarters instruct postmasters that a mail sorter is entitled to use his stool whenever he pleases.
181. That the Department study the possibility of acquiring a more comfortable type stool and of covering the floor in front of the sorting cases with some material to ease the strain.
182. That the Department take the necessary steps so that employees working evening or night shifts may have the use of lunch rooms or cafeterias or, failing this, that it supply them with hot-plates or automatic dispensers.

(1) In railway mail cars, the clerks in order to reach mail bags in the baggage compartment must twist their way through a "creep hole" of approximately two square feet located in the wall near the floor. A person of average size is able to do so but only with difficulty.

We suggested that this "creep hole" be replaced by a door. The Department considers this is an interesting suggestion, even if it means modifications to the sorting cases. It intends to discuss this proposal with the

railway companies. Evidently, it will be necessary to be careful not to reduce the working space of the sorting clerks to any great extent.

(2) Railway mail clerks also protested against the lamentable way the cars are maintained and equipped: insufficient lighting, heating, ventilation, windows, doors, floors and sorting cases badly maintained and the general lack of acceptable sanitary facilities.

The Department acknowledges the merit of a good number of these grievances. It has notified the railway companies accordingly but without too much success. It intends to adopt a firmer attitude and expects that these companies will finally deal with these different requests.

WE RECOMMEND:

183. That the Department continue to make vigorous representations to the railway companies to obtain an improvement in physical and environmental working conditions in railway mail cars.
184. That, wherever possible, and especially with cars expected to remain in service, the Department arrange to have the openings to the baggage compartment enlarged.

6. Dust

In the course of a day's work employees handle mail bags in the carrying out of their respective duties. These bags are rather dirty and this is understandable.

Employees complain that the Department does not clean them periodically and that the dust from the bags and the dust raised during their handling sometimes makes the work areas unbearable and unhealthy.

At Headquarters' request, the Department of National Health and Welfare carried out a study of the situation at Toronto in January 1965 and came to the conclusion that the dust in the post office did not seriously affect the health of the employees.

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We are quite willing to take their word for it,<sup>1/</sup> but the problem still exists. Even if certain working conditions do not constitute a serious hazard in themselves, they nonetheless are undesirable and continue to be a source of irritation and constant complaint.

A solution to this problem must be found even if it is not altogether satisfactory. Mail bags could be cleaned at regular intervals. The Department states that attempts made to clean bags in Canada through washing, dry cleaning or dust extraction by vacuuming, had been found unsatisfactory and have proved to be very expensive. On the other hand, methods to clean mail bags in the United States and England are relatively successful.

It seems, moreover, that the amount of dust which clings to the inside of a mail bag will vary and that some cleaning methods are more effective than others depending on the nature of the material of the bag. In Canada, mail bags are made of canvas.

Finally, there is a certain amount of dust in the working areas and we have observed inexplicable shortcomings.

Whether the daily cleaning of a post office is entrusted to a caretaker employed by the Department of Public Works or to a sub-contractor or a person appointed by that Department, there are too many post offices where cleanliness leaves much to be desired.

WE RECOMMEND:

185. That the Department exercise greater care to ensure that post offices are kept suitably clean and that it issue instructions accordingly.

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1/ It is always possible that this is not the case in some post offices or postal stations where the ventilation is even more inadequate.

186. That postmasters, either personally or through a person delegated by them, make regular inspection tours to check on the cleanliness of the post offices under their management.
187. That postmasters correct the situation in all cases where they see the caretaker or the cleaner not doing his work satisfactorily.
188. That the Department recognize the right of local joint committees to make recommendations on this matter.
189. That the Department continue its research in order to find the most practical solution regarding the cleaning of mail bags.

We brought to the attention of Headquarters a few isolated complaints concerning the use of mail bags for the conveyance of articles which are not postal matters. Headquarters has recently given orders to put an end to such abuses.

#### 7. Construction of post offices, air-conditioning and lighting

##### Construction of post offices

Over the years, the policy of the Department and of the appropriate authorities has aimed at the replacement, in successive stages, of those post offices which prove to be inadequate for one reason or another.<sup>1/</sup>

Since January 1, 1956, more than 1,100 new buildings, sheltering about 17,000 employees, have been built. This last figure represents slightly more than half of the staff and semi-staff post office employees working in premises provided by the Crown. Of course, some of these buildings are small and are used only by one or two employees; but there are others, in Vancouver, in Winnipeg and in Quebec City, for instance, which are impressive buildings housing a large number of personnel. At the present time, 115 post offices, including the new Edmonton postal terminal, are under construction. Furthermore, the Department informs

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1/ We were rather surprised to find that, in some large centres, post office buildings, although of recent construction, no longer meet the needs of the postal service.

the Commission that progress is being made on plans for new postal terminals in Ottawa and in Toronto and that it has undertaken a preliminary study with a view to erecting new premises for the Montreal post office. Upon completion of all these new buildings, approximately 8,500 employees who are presently working in buildings considered sub-standard, will be relocated.

The Department submits that, in the light of past experience, employees should recognize that any post office not meeting the current standards of working conditions, should be replaced or renovated as financial resources allow.

However, the Commission realizes that it may still take several years before construction in Toronto and in Montreal begins and it suggests strongly that measures be taken in the meantime to improve these buildings to make them conform to more suitable standards.

WE RECOMMEND:

190. That in preparing plans for new post offices, the appropriate authorities take into further consideration all expected postal service expansion for the following ten years and of the probable consequences of this expansion from all standpoints, including that of the comfort and welfare of non-supervisory operating personnel.
191. That mobile partitions be used in new post offices to facilitate the rearrangement of the working premises should the need arise.

Air-conditioning

Until a year or so ago, the Government was not ready to consider installing air-conditioning systems in its offices. A more flexible attitude has since been adopted. For instance, such a system was authorized for the Winnipeg postal terminal. It is expected that the same type of system will be installed in the terminals now being planned. The Department also intends to ask the Department of Public Works to make a decision on the feasibility of installing such a system in some of the older buildings, and if it is not possible, then provide compact air-conditioning units.

WE RECOMMEND:

192. That air-conditioning systems be installed in all future staff post offices providing the climate of the region warrants it.
193. That failing to provide such installation in existing staff post offices, the necessary steps be taken to ensure adequate ventilation for employees in all areas where they are required to work.

Lighting

Improved lighting is now installed in new post offices. The Department states that official codes and standards are being followed to the letter in old post offices. It considers them satisfactory and comparable to those applied in the private sector. It claims that it has replaced all obsolete lighting equipment wherever possible. It has obtained agreement from the Department of Public Works that fluorescent lighting be installed, and if this is not possible that additional lights be provided.

Yet there are complaints. Some appear well-founded. We visited many sorting areas in basement postal stations and in railway mail cars particularly, where lighting was far from adequate.

WE RECOMMEND:

194. That a complete inspection be made of each staff post office, of each postal station and of each railway mail car, to ensure that the lighting is both satisfactory and in accordance with established standards and codes.
195. That this inspection be carried out through local joint committees.

8. Transportation

(1) As a general rule, the Department is not responsible for the transportation of an employee from his home to his place of work, or vice versa.

(2) However, it does provide transportation from one work location to another, such as for the letter carrier who leaves the post office to go to the

start of his walk or who returns at the end of the morning or afternoon and for the postal clerk who is transferred from one postal station to another, without prior notice.

(3) The Department states that it does not disregard the financial burden of transportation costs to employees. As far as possible, it takes the schedules of the public transportation services into account when setting the starting and finishing times for each shift. It says it takes the same precautions when laying out the carriers' walks. It adds that if such a walk ends more than 500 yards from the nearest point of public transportation, or if there is any excessive waiting period, it ensures that the carrier is transported by other means.

(4) The normal agreement for the transportation of carriers by public transportation is a flat rate contract on the basis of four trips per person per day. When such a contract cannot be arranged, either because the transportation company refuses or because it demands an exorbitant rate, the Department issues from four to nine tickets to the carrier on the basis of the characteristics of his walk.

(5) Variation in the volume of mail and in walking conditions affect the time when the carrier completes his walk. The Department admits that it is therefore sometimes difficult to schedule transportation arrangements so that the carrier does not have to wait at all.

(6) Recently the Department revised its regulations respecting the transportation of letter carriers to assure them adequate transportation at all times.

Generally, we find these explanations satisfactory. We want to remind employees, who are not convinced that all these measures are being taken, that the Department is willing to discuss this matter and to seek a solution in keeping with its general policy.

We heard of two other problems concerning transportation.

(1) The first concerns only the letter carriers.

They propose that the Department rescind the regulations prohibiting the use of their cars to travel to and from their walks.

This proposal involves both advantages and disadvantages.

#### Advantages

- a) If this was permitted the carrier would arrive sooner at his walk and would perform his duties in less time than the eight hours now allotted. As a result, it would be possible to add points of call to his walk to restore the work period to eight full hours, therefore the number of walks could be decreased as well as the personnel and costs.
- b) Under certain conditions, letter carriers might reach an agreement with the Department concerning the transportation of mail to relay boxes, thus eliminating transportation of mail by contractors.

#### Disadvantages

- a) The Department would probably be obliged to discontinue its flat rate contracts with transportation companies who would no longer be interested because of the greatly reduced requirements and the likelihood of frequent changes.
- b) One must bear in mind that not all carriers own a car. On the regular carrier's rotation day or when absent on leave his replacement may not own a car, or may not wish to use it: he then would have to use public transportation. Hence the normal starting time of the delivery would be delayed and complaints would probably be received from some patrons.
- c) In case of accident or mechanical breakdown any delay would affect the time of delivery.

- d) The Crown could be exposed to possible third party liability.
- e) The Department believes that, in some cases, the walks would have to be re-arranged so that the starting and finishing points would be reasonably close together, to prevent the letter carrier from having to walk too far to reach his car after completing his rounds.

Although incomplete, this preliminary review points out the many difficulties which the letter carriers' proposal would create. These difficulties are not insurmountable. The Department proposes to conduct a study and to discuss the pros and cons with the Letter Carriers' Union.

(2) The second problem affects all employees.

They complained that the notice given by the Department when overtime is required is often so short that they do not have sufficient time to arrange for transportation home after the public transportation facilities have stopped operating.

The Department admits that there is insufficient warning at times but not through any fault of its own. Under such circumstances, we believe that it should provide employees with the necessary transportation.

WE RECOMMEND:

- 196. That postmasters review periodically the agreements for the transportation of employees, especially in cases when public transportation is not available.
- 197. That the Department undertake a complete study of the carriers' proposal to rescind the regulation prohibiting the use of their privately owned cars in carrying out their duties.
- 198. That after this study is completed, the Department discuss the pros and cons with the Letter Carriers' Union, first at the national level and if necessary at the local level.
- 199. That the Department assume responsibility for providing transportation to employees required to work overtime, without sufficient notice, after public transportation has stopped operating.

9. Parking

Many postal employees own cars which they use to travel to and from work. For many this is neither a luxury nor a whim, but a necessity. The Department sometimes sets an arrival or departure time which prevents employees from relying on public transportation. We are concerned most of all with such employees.

The Department of Public Works makes available to other departments parking lots of various sizes and establishes priority guidelines in their allocation of parking spaces.

For post office employees the order of allocation is usually as follows:

- a) government-owned vehicles;
- b) district director, postmaster, senior officials and physically handicapped employees;
- c) employees frequently called upon to use their own cars on official business;
- d) others. Usually, on a first-come-first-served basis.

(1) Many complaints were raised about the small number of spaces available as well as the method of allocation. Reference was made to spaces not utilized during the evening and at night. Departure time for postal employees may conflict with the arrival time of those authorized to use them in the daytime. An adjustment of 15 minutes or so in the arrival times would allow postal employees greater utilization of the parking spaces allocated either to the post office or to other departments.

(2) We were informed also that in one city in particular, the mail contractor leaves his trucks within the post office overnight, thereby blocking off parking space which could be used by employees.

(3) We were also told that spaces are being allocated to personnel of other departments who sometimes have less priority than postal workers.

Far be it from us to believe that an easy solution can be found to the problem of parking facilities for postal employees.

Post offices, in most cases, are located in the centre of a commercial district. Nearby or easily accessible and usable vacant lots are few in such areas or so costly that the Government does not consider it a wise policy to buy or rent them for the sole purpose of providing parking facilities. The inner courtyards, more often than not, are so small that to allow parking would probably mean taking the risk, at certain hours, of either paralysing mail trucks and other vehicular traffic, or make circulation very difficult.

WE RECOMMEND:

200. That, when planning the construction of new post offices, measures be taken to ensure postal employees adequate parking facilities particularly for those on evening and night shifts.
201. That, in the future, bearing in mind local conditions, the Department allocate available parking spaces to employees according to their needs rather than on a first-come-first-served basis, and that it set as basic criteria the distance the employee must travel as well as the availability of public transportation.
202. That where employees have an equal need for parking spaces, seniority be the deciding factor.
203. That the Department, where limited parking facilities are available, make every effort to adjust shift schedules to coincide with the operating hours of public transportation.
204. That the use of parking spaces for contractors' vehicles be strictly prohibited, except when it is an immediate operational requirement.
205. That consideration be given by the Department, always bearing in mind local conditions, to the feasibility of allocating parking spaces on a rotation basis so that a greater number of employees may enjoy this privilege.
206. That every effort be made by the Department to obtain parking spaces from the Department of Public Works for evening and night shift workers, bearing in mind that some persons using spaces allocated to other departments may have less priority.

207. That, wherever possible, arrangements be made with the assistance of the Department of Public Works, for the use, during evening and night shifts, of vacant spaces rightly allocated to other departments and that, if necessary, shift schedules be adjusted by fifteen minutes or so to arrive at better co-ordination.

208. That the Department allow the participation of the local joint committees in all matters mentioned in recommendations 201 to 207 inclusive.

10. Smoking

Postal clerks and letter carriers requested the right to smoke at any time and any place during their tour of duty. The Department recognizes this right but deems it advisable to restrict the exercise of this right as a safety measure or simply as a sign of good manners.

There has been no known incident where fire in a post office has been attributed to the negligence of an employee smoking. However, a few cases of spoiled or damaged mail were reported.

We do not believe that the risk should be taken. We admit that the Department must take adequate precautions. We agree, therefore, with its decision not to allow employees who handle or sort mail to smoke while carrying out these duties. On the other hand, a larger number of areas could be designated for smoking. These should be as close as possible to the working areas.

We believe that the existing regulation concerning smoking for wicket clerks is too rigid. We agree that they should not be allowed to smoke while serving the public. Such restrictions exist for employees in many public agencies, banks, stores, and other industrial or commercial establishments. To extend this restriction to the whole wicket area is another matter.

A comment should be made about the letter carriers smoking on their walks.

We have no objections to carriers being authorized to smoke outside the office. We are quite sure that they will abide by the most elementary rules of courtesy when they come in contact with their patrons.

WE RECOMMEND:

209. That present departmental regulations on smoking be maintained except for letter carriers after they have left the post office and wicket clerks when not directly serving the public.
210. That Headquarters authorize postmasters to designate a larger number of smoking areas for inside employees handling or sorting mail.

## CHAPTER 25

### PREFERRED ASSIGNMENT FOR CAUSE

Because of age, illness or accident an employee may become incapable of carrying out all the normal daily tasks of his position, even though he may still be physically capable of performing some of his duties.

Postal clerks, and letter carriers in particular, were concerned with this problem. They suggested that the Department, as much as possible, assign lighter duties to such an employee.

This suggestion is prompted by a legitimate and commendable desire to help fellow employees. But it poses serious problems.

There are only a few full-time positions in the Post Office requiring a minimum of physical effort. These positions, referred to as "preferred assignments" are very much in demand and are allotted on a seniority basis, provided applicants are qualified. To make these positions available to handicapped employees, the staff organizations, as well as the employees, would therefore have to agree to amend their present seniority policy.<sup>1/</sup> This is a matter for serious consideration.

The Department states that it makes every effort to assign the more elderly or handicapped employees to lighter duties whenever possible. In some cases, if the employees concerned possess the required knowledge and qualifications, it attempts to have them transferred to another department.

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<sup>1/</sup> See Chapter 12, "Seniority".

It may well be that the Department cannot do much more, bearing in mind its role and operational commitments. Hence there is no easy solution.

The Department might be well advised, especially in the larger staff post offices, to review the whole situation on a local basis to determine if one or more new full-time preferred positions could be created, or whether one or more tasks considered light could be combined or modified. If this were possible some handicapped employees would not have to leave the postal service.

WE RECOMMEND:

211. That the Department continue to assign employees, handicapped but physically capable of working, to lighter assignments.
212. That the staff organizations, as well as the employees, assist the Department by agreeing that a certain number of positions called "preferred" or others with lighter duties be made available to handicapped employees regardless of seniority.
213. That district directors and postmasters of the larger staff post offices, with the assistance and co-operation of the local joint committees, carry out a study to determine, in accordance with local conditions, if one or more new preferred positions with lighter duties can be created.

## CHAPTER 26

### SOME MAJOR FRINGE BENEFITS

Postal employees enjoy all the fringe benefits granted by the Government to civil servants. Several have been referred to in preceding chapters.

In the present chapter, we discuss, with one exception, fringe benefits having social security implications whose aim is to protect the worker against the probable or possible hazards of life, e.g., illness and old age.

Some of these benefits formed the subject of remarks, criticisms and suggestions as numerous as they were diversified. It would be useless and tedious to comment on each one of them. We have attempted to group them on the basis of the proposals contained in the briefs submitted by the national leaders of the staff organizations last April.

Before discussing these problems we should make clear what we have in mind.

(1) Whether it be in the normal course of events or in the climate of collective bargaining, the fringe benefits in question are assessed generally as a more or less indivisible "package". Usually, they are considered in relation to salaries.

As indicated above, employees discussed only some of these benefits. We do not blame them for having taken this attitude and for not wanting to lose those benefits with which they said they were satisfied.

But we cannot ignore or lose sight of the fact that we have no jurisdiction in the matter of salaries and that salaries will be thoroughly reviewed shortly "in the collective bargaining climate".

(2) Another aspect gave us food for thought.

We asked ourselves if, within terms of reference, it would be reasonable to make precise recommendations on a subject so far-reaching and of interest to all civil servants. The staff organizations to which the latter belong have not appeared before our Commission. We do not know if they support the views expressed by the postal employees.

For all these reasons, and after careful consideration, we have decided to set forth the main demands received, to express some of our own reactions and to make only a few general recommendations.

We hope this approach will be understood and accepted. In other respects it should help the appropriate authorities and all interested parties to know where they stand and to act accordingly, if they deem it advisable.

1. Superannuation and death benefit plans

The Public Service Superannuation Act<sup>1/</sup> provides a retirement pension to postal employees subject to certain conditions.

On the whole, these employees want the Government to increase the benefits and reduce the contributions.

They recommended:

- a) that retirement be optional after 25 years of service;
- b) that the pension be paid after 30 rather than 35 years;
- c) that a widow's pension be increased from 50% to 100% and that 10% be granted for each dependent child to a maximum of four children;
- d) that the calculation of entitlements be based on the best five years of salary instead of the present six years;

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1/ R.S., 1952/53, c. 47, as amended.

- e) that benefits be paid on the basis of  $2\frac{1}{2}\%$  per year of service instead of 2%;
- f) that employees be paid bank-rate interest on superannuation refunds.

They maintained that the new Canada Pension Plan was superior to the Superannuation Plan because the former provides greater benefits and requires relatively smaller contributions over a shorter period of time.

Finally, the staff organizations have asked to participate in the administration of the Superannuation Fund so as to be in a better position to inform their members on the true financial position of the Fund and its actuarial needs.

All those who made these different recommendations before our Commission must admit that they have not supported them with any careful study.

The Commission, however, made enquiries and believes that it is doing the postal employees a service by summarizing some of the information received. Perhaps it will be found far too much in favour of maintaining the status quo. No matter what we say, the staff organizations will some day have to undertake the necessary research in order to discuss with the appropriate authorities any proposed amendment to the Public Service Superannuation Act. Our comments will at least enable them to look at the whole problem in a more objective manner and to know beforehand some of the difficulties they will have to resolve eventually.

We are under the impression that postal employees do not have an adequate appreciation of certain advantages received under the Superannuation Act. They do not know how it operates. They have no idea what funds are required to maintain the Fund on a sound actuarial basis. It is possible that only an actuary can understand all its financial implications!

(1) Undoubtedly the current balance in the Superannuation Account is large. This balance, to which are added the current annual employee contributions

and government credits, exceeds by far payments out of the Account. This has led to a general impression that there is a surplus and that benefits should be increased.

The Superannuation Account follows the principles of funding generally accepted for employer-employee pension plans.

Pension benefits are regarded as deferred compensation. Once the rates are set, contributions are collected at estimated levels required to accumulate enough funds during the active lifetime of the contributors and to pay, in due course, the predetermined pensions and additional benefits. If the number of employees in the Public Service were to remain unchanged and if the Superannuation Account came to maturity at the same time, annual employee contributions and government credits (including interest) should, theoretically, be equal to benefit payments. Until such circumstances prevail (if ever they will) contributions and sums credited to the Account exceed benefit payments and the Account continues to increase. This increase simply reflects the growing liabilities in respect to contributors on active service as well as pensioners. It does not indicate a "surplus".

In other words, the fact that income for a year exceeds benefits paid or that the balance in the Superannuation Account increases over the years does not mean that there is a surplus of funds in this Account.

There is only one way in which to determine whether there is a surplus or a deficit: establish, by means of actuarial calculations, the value of all benefit payments which may fall due, and the sum of future contributions of all contributors, past and present. The Public Service Superannuation Act requires that such an actuarial valuation be made and that a report be tabled in Parliament, at least once every five years.<sup>1/</sup>

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1/ The last report, tabled on November 12th, 1964, can be obtained by the staff associations, on request.

It would thus appear that no one can say that there now exists a marginal surplus which would justify the granting of additional benefits. There is no surplus as such, there is only a balance. This balance, we reiterate, represents the amount which, together with future contributions from present contributors, and the matching contributions by the Government and interest earnings, should be sufficient to provide all benefits to past and present contributors and their dependents. If, however, the present value of future benefits were to exceed the present value of future contributions plus the balance on hand, the Fund would be in deficit by an amount equal to such excess.

(2) The percentage of salary (i.e., total contribution rate) required to provide for future benefits of new contributors came up also for discussion.

If Public Service salaries increase in the future at an average rate of 3% per annum it is estimated that, on the average, 18% of salaries of new male contributors and 16% of new female contributors will be required to provide for their future benefits.

Since contributions are made by male contributors at the rate of  $6\frac{1}{2}\%$  of their salary and by female contributors at the rate of 5%, the actual cost to the Government of benefits that will become payable to new contributors will equal approximately double the contributions paid by these contributors.

During the ten years, ended March 1965, employees contributed \$472.5 million to the Public Service Superannuation Account whereas the Government credited \$865.8 million, apart from \$526 million of interest. In respect to this, \$39.9 million had yet to be charged as a budgetary expenditure as of March 31, 1965. Thus, excluding the interest credit, the ultimate cost to the Government may well be more than twice the contributions of public servants.

Not taking into account the extra cost arising from future general salary adjustments the Superannuation Account, as at March 31, 1965, was thus

practically in balance. However, deficiencies may arise from time to time because:

- a) basic contributions are not adequate;
- b) no special credits are provided for increases in liabilities arising out of increases in general levels of salary; or
- c) the economic development has not been as favourable as anticipated in previous forecasts.

There have never been any deficiencies because of the lack of matching contributions by the Government. Successive governments have, in the past, liquidated these deficiencies when it appeared convenient or appropriate. To avoid these losses in interest credits over a period of time, without correspondingly increasing the balance in the Account, the Department of Finance has credited the Account with an amount equal to the entire deficiency and has entered a debit to the same amount in the Government balance sheet in the form of a deferred charge. This procedure enabled the Government to liquidate this deferred charge as it appeared appropriate and, at the same time, to reflect in the Account the full public service pension net liability so that interest credits could be made on the total net liability with no consequent loss.

(3) Excesses of employee contributions and Government credits over benefit payments have been and are being used for current revenue purposes by the Government of the day.

There is nothing sinister or questionable in this situation.

Since the Superannuation Account is simply an account in the Consolidated Revenue Fund, it is normal that current excesses of receipts over disbursements be available to the Government.

Furthermore, in any private employer-employee pension plan, the administrators of such a fund, knowing that they will not have to make immediate payments, always make normal investments, either by the financing of Government activities, or to promote Government guaranteed enterprises.

In the case of the Public Service, there is no reason to doubt the survival of the employer. There can be no safer investment than an obligation of the Government of Canada. The balance of the Superannuation Account is the equivalent of such an investment, backed by the obligation of the Government to pay benefits to Public Service contributors and their dependents in accordance with the provisions of the Public Service Superannuation Act. It does not mean, that, because this balance is not in the hands of a chartered bank or an equivalent amount of gold is not stored in the vaults of the Parliament Buildings, that future benefit payments are jeopardized. This balance is guaranteed as a right by law: so long as Parliament has the power of taxation or recourse to borrowing, the benefits provided in the legislation will be paid.

(4) If the present relationship between contributions and benefits is to be maintained, any increase in benefits is subject to a corresponding increase in contributions. The reverse is also true. Consequently, if the rate of contributions is decreased, the benefits will be decreased proportionately. Hence, it follows that interest payments on refund, as suggested by the staff organizations, would warrant an increase in contributions or a decrease in benefits. It is estimated that it would cost approximately 1% of the yearly balance to pay interest on refunds. It would seem preferable to keep the benefits on a more favourable basis and thus allow the great majority of contributors to benefit from them.

(5) Some people wonder why the Canada Pension Plan provides, initially, more benefits in proportion to the amounts contributed. There are two reasons:

- a) The Canada Pension Plan is not fully funded like the plan under the Public Service Superannuation Act.
- b) It has a relatively short ten-year maturity period. This factor, combined with the preceding one, means that returns of the Canada Pension Plan are bound to be disproportionate, particularly during the early years.

We would like to refer to the study made by the Royal Commission on Government Organization.

This study mentions that the Federal Superannuation Plan is just as generous as all or almost all private plans and is superior to most. The Report is quite explicit in stating that this Pension Plan is very costly for the Government. It enumerates a number of advantages which we would like to quote for the information of postal employees:

- "The Pension Plan for the public service represents a substantial advantage in relation to the plans available to employees in industry. While most employees in medium and large firms are covered by pension plans, the Public Service Superannuation Act provides a number of advantages:
- Participation is automatic, whereas eligibility provisions in many industrial plans specify age or length of service.
- After an employee has made contributions for thirty-five years he ceases to make payments into the plan, whereas almost all industrial plans require contributions up to the date of retirement.
- The pension formula provides two per cent of earnings for each year of service whereas a majority of industrial unit benefit plans have a less generous benefit formula. The earnings' base under the public service plan is the employee's earnings averaged over the best six years of service, thus yielding much higher pensions than would the same percentage of average career earnings. Few employees in industry have pensions calculated against the best years of average earnings. The earnings' base period under the Superannuation Act was changed recently from the "best 10 years" to the "best 6 years", a distinct sweetening of the pension plan, with an accompanying increase in its cost to the government.
- Survivors' benefits under the public service plan are significantly more generous than the great majority of industrial plans. On the death of the husband, the wife receives 50% of the husband's pension, plus 10% for each child up to a maximum of 90% of the pension. The pension ceases if she remarries, but is restored should she again become a widow.
- The provision under the public service plan for immediate annuities, without discount for age, in the event of disability, is significantly more generous than those found in most industrial plans.

- There is full vesting of pension rights after five years' service, accrued rights being granted in the form of deferred annuities.
- The rate of employee contribution (6½% of earnings for men and 5% for women) under the public service plan is significantly higher than the most common rate, 5% of earnings, found in industrial plans. This is offset, however, by the provision for cessation of contributions after thirty-five years of contributory service."<sup>1/</sup>

The same Commission had this to say with regards to Supplementary Death Benefits:

"The Public Service Superannuation Act provides a supplementary death benefit...based on salary up to a maximum of \$5,000... This equivalent of group life insurance for civil servants is in keeping with industrial practice, but the amount of the employer contribution in industry is normally at least 50 per cent whereas the government's share of the cost is considerably smaller. Formulae for establishing maximum individual coverage vary widely in industry but many office employees participate in plans providing coverage at least equal to their annual earnings. Post-retirement coverage and total and permanent disability are provided for in many industrial group life insurance plans. On balance, the supplementary death benefit for civil servants is less favourable than equivalent group life insurance plans commonly available in industry.

The supplementary death benefits in the public service should, however, be viewed together with the survivorship provisions in the Public Service Superannuation Act."<sup>2/</sup>

Several staff organizations suggested that the maximum coverage for survivors in the Death Benefit Plan be increased to the equivalent of the employee's annual earnings.

We agree entirely with this suggestion.

(6) Some employees are concerned about the effects of the Canada Pension Plan on their superannuation. The Government has provided many explanations on this matter. Suffice it to say that the total contributions by employees did not increase when the Canada Pension Plan came into force. In some cases, the combined benefits

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<sup>1/</sup> The Royal Commission on Government Organization, Volume 1, Report 3, Personnel Management, Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1960, pp. 400 and 401.

<sup>2/</sup> Ibid., p. 400.

will exceed modestly the retirement benefits. They will not be less except where an employee retires and subsequently finds employment outside the Public Service. This employee will then have to contribute to the Canada Pension Plan after he has reached the age of 65 but he will receive only the "decreased" share of his civil service pension.

Superannuation benefits paid before age 65 to persons retiring between the ages of 60 and 64 will be the same as those which are now paid under the Public Service Superannuation Act.

(7) We agree in principle with a more active participation by the staff organizations in the administration of the Fund. It should be noted, however, that there is already an Advisory Committee on the Public Service Superannuation Act and that this committee includes representatives of the various staff organizations. This committee considers all proposed amendments and makes appropriate recommendations to the Minister of Finance.

We suggest that the staff organizations obtain the services of a competent professional actuary so that he may advise them on the practicality of their proposals, and establish once and for all whether or not the two billion dollar balance is absolutely necessary to maintain the Superannuation Fund on a sound actuarial basis. Perhaps then the staff organizations will find it necessary to revise their position and submit other recommendations, better understood and more appropriate, with a view to obtain additional benefits.

## 2. Accumulated sick leave credits

Two definite proposals on sick leave were submitted to us:

- a) that henceforth this leave be earned and accumulated at the rate of one and one half days (instead of  $1\frac{1}{4}$  days) per calendar month of employment in the course of which an employee has been paid a minimum of ten days; and

b) that the employee, when retiring, resigning, or leaving the service, voluntarily or compulsorily, receive the equivalent in cash of all accumulated sick leave credits.<sup>1/</sup>

Many employees consider sick leave as an established right and not as insurance against the risk and consequences of a work stoppage which is beyond their control and of an indeterminate duration.

Some are inclined, at a favourable time and prior to retirement, to take advantage of their sick leave credits which they consider a useless reserve.

Under the Civil Service Regulations <sup>2/</sup> the deputy head is not obliged to grant sick leave. Of course, in practice, he does not refuse. The wording of the Regulation does not give any indication that this leave is an established right and, even less, that it accumulates as a reserve which can be disposed of at will by the employee.

Perhaps it would be just as well to return to the policy applicable prior to 1962 and to re-establish a relationship between retiring leave and accumulated sick leave. Although we do not have any statistics at hand establishing that, since this change of policy, employees have made greater use of accumulated sick leave, the fact remains nonetheless that an excellent incentive has thus been eliminated.

However, employees should not expect to have their accumulated sick leave paid in cash without taking into account the maximum of six months retiring leave or the gratuity to which they are now entitled.

However, there are several possible solutions:

- a) to undertake a study of trends in the use of sick leave during the course of the two last years preceding retirement;

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<sup>1/</sup> Mention was also made of certain abuses of so-called "casual" sick leave. This was discussed in Chapter 13, "Leave".

<sup>2/</sup> Sections 47 to 54.

- b) to analyse the pattern of sick leave since 1962, comparing it to those years when the amount of retiring leave granted depended upon the accumulated sick leave credits available;
- c) based on the results of these studies and without forgetting that the field operating services of the post office are very similar to industry, to give serious consideration to the granting of a compensation under one of the following conditions:
  - (i) pay 25% to 30% of the accumulated sick leave after deduction of the six months retiring leave or of the gratuity granted;
  - (ii) after a certain number of days of sick leave have been accumulated, to add a percentage of these accumulated days to the vacation leave at the employee's own discretion. Even though vacation leave in the Public Service is rather generous, this addition might prompt employees not to abuse sick leave. We believe that this formula would not be too costly for the Government because the staff would remain on the job at a time when most needed.

### 3. Longevity pay

Longevity pay is extra pay with the sole criteria being long and satisfactory service. It is an incentive for employees who have been "dead-ended" in a job which offers very little opportunity for advancement.

For the Post Office Department, longevity pay appears advisable in principle. However, it gives rise to such problems that we suggest to employees that they carry out a more thorough study before recommending it officially. Here are some of the problems:

- a) At the present time, it would be better for employees to concentrate their efforts on obtaining higher pay scales, on improving recruiting

methods and on adopting training methods and measures facilitating rotation or transfers to enable them to increase their knowledge and their qualifications and to increase correspondingly their possibilities for promotion which appear to them to be so slight today.

- b) It would be preferable to try and improve those fringe benefits, which they have already, to a more acceptable level rather than ask for an entirely new benefit.
- c) Employees should consider the effects of longevity pay on the basic salary. The employer must not take advantage of this to avoid justified salary increases nor should the employees demand it as a means of obtaining the equivalent of a pay increase to their basic salary. The principle of equal pay for equal work must be accepted and followed. Longevity pay must not mean a change whereby some employees would earn more, on a yearly basis, than their immediate supervisors.
- d) There is a serious risk that longevity pay may affect the productivity of employees as a whole or destroy their ambition.
- e) If the staff organizations decide not to postpone their demand for longevity pay they will have to decide to which group of employees this will apply, the number of years of service after which it will be granted and the intervals at which it will increase and in what proportion. Consideration will also have to be given either to the time the employee has spent in the service as a whole or in the same grade or if years of service will count only after the maximum rate of pay has been reached.

It is not up to this Commission to answer these questions and others just as pertinent, nor to suggest any type of longevity pay plan for the postal employees. This responsibility rests with their national leaders. They must obtain all information required, weigh the pros and cons, and scrutinize plans in use in Canada and elsewhere and the difficulties encountered in their application.

A survey of practices followed in industry for non-clerical personnel shows that only about 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ % of employees benefit from a longevity pay plan. Another survey, dating back to 1964, shows that the principle of longevity pay has become generally accepted in collective agreements respecting most policemen across the country. Such a plan applied to 75% of the 80 municipal corporations surveyed.

We do not believe that the payment of longevity pay can be of any help to the Department in finding a solution to its problems of recruiting and personnel turnover in some areas such as the central part of Ontario. These problems apply generally to recent recruits, and do not apply to older employees who will be the only ones to benefit from this bonus.

On the other hand, longevity pay would help boost the morale of long-service employees. A study made in February 1966 indicates that a good percentage of non-supervisory postal employees have been at the maximum of their class for many years. We note that 39.5%, or 8,775 employees, have been in this category for five years or more, 18.3%, or 4,066, for ten years or more, 7.9%, or 1,745, for 15 years or more, 1.6%, or 345, for 20 years or more, 0.6%, or 143, for 25 years or more, 0.2%, or 52, for 30 years or more, 0.1%, or 22, for 35 years or more.<sup>1/</sup>

The average number of years of service an employee has served before becoming a postal officer grade 1 is slightly more than 17 years.

Under such circumstances we think it desirable that postal employees, having 15 to 20 years of service, be given longevity pay in cash. They will certainly appreciate this more than an award of a service pin or of some other token!

There may also be other departments, besides the Post Office, where the same situation exists and where an impressive number of employees belong to dead-end classes or categories and who may have just as serious if not a more serious problem of "dead-ending". Of course, it is not up to this Commission to discuss it.

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<sup>1/</sup> There are 6,655 employees (or 30%) with less than five years of service and only 6,730 (or 30.3%) who have not reached the maximum of their salary range.

But this should be another reason to prompt the Government to make its own thorough study of this problem, in the light of precedents set by other levels of Government, and to enquire into the advantages and disadvantages of longevity pay, of its consequential effects upon the basic pay plan, of the financial implications involved, of its repercussions on the Civil Service as a whole and of all other related factors.

#### 4. Surgical-medical insurance plans

(1) Postal employees believe that the Government should assume the total cost of the group surgical-medical insurance plan rather than only half.

In the private sector, most employees contribute to similar plans but it should be pointed out that major medical costs are included in the federal plan whereas they are not in many industrial plans.

(2) Employees living in Saskatchewan asked that the Government pay half the cost of the premium of their provincial health plan. They claim they are not in as favourable a position as federal civil servants in other provinces.

A committee of the National Joint Council of the Public Service of Canada studied this problem in 1964. After a review of comparative costs and benefits, this committee, composed of representatives of both the Government and the employees, did not consider it advisable to recommend such a measure in its report.

Here again, we note that the staff organizations are poorly informed and urge the appropriate authorities to make this report available to them.

(3) It should be remembered that other provinces are setting up their own surgical-medical plan and that the Government has announced its intention to adopt a new national plan on July 1, 1968. All these new plans will have a bearing on the cost of contributions and will necessitate changes in the benefits and advantages of the present plan.

Under the circumstances, it is best to wait.

WE RECOMMEND:

214. That the staff organizations undertake a thorough study of the entire field of social security fringe benefits enjoyed now by postal employees to determine precisely the nature of and reason for the amendments they are clamouring for, including the possible adoption of a longevity pay plan.
215. That for this purpose, the appropriate authorities make available to the staff organizations all information they require to carry out this study.
216. That the staff organizations keep their own members informed on this study.
217. That the appropriate authorities, either during the forthcoming collective bargaining negotiations or in the general atmosphere of collective bargaining, agree to discuss these fringe benefits and all their terms and conditions.

P A R T   I V

PROBLEMS OF PARTICULAR

INTEREST TO POSTAL CLERKS



## CHAPTER 27

### WICKET CLERKS

Postal clerks on wicket duties perform various tasks, e.g., selling postage and unemployment insurance stamps, registering mail, servicing stamp meter machines, conducting transactions for the post office savings bank, insuring letters and parcels, etc. They must therefore have detailed knowledge of departmental regulations and procedures. They handle financial transactions and must account for and make good any shortage. Their daily work also brings them in contact with the public.

A certain number of the wicket clerks' grievances are common to postal clerks in general, and have already been examined in Part III of our Report. Therefore, we shall deal here only with those problems which are peculiar to wicket clerks.

(1) Each wicket clerk has, or should have, his own cash till. This is a departmental rule.

Apparently this rule is not always followed to the letter in some post offices. Thus, during peak periods or in the absence of other clerks and on orders from a supervisor or postmaster, two wicket clerks or one wicket clerk and a temporary helper may occasionally use the same till on the same day. The Department agrees that this practice cannot be tolerated. So do we.

It sometimes happens that a wicket clerk has to serve more than one wicket at a time, and this second practice seems just as improper to us. Each employee should use only his own till. If there are isolated cases, the wicket clerks involved should inform the postmaster or the district director, if necessary, so that they may stop this practice as soon as possible.

(2) The wicket clerks have a floater fund of \$25.00 which they say is insufficient. They pointed out inconveniences for both themselves and the patrons.

The Department states that if a wicket clerk needs more change it can be obtained from a main cash fund. However, sometimes this fund is not available for one reason or another when the wicket opens for business.

(3) We have mentioned that the wicket clerks have to account for and make good their cash shortage.

The present policy is, briefly, as follows:

- a) in every post office, each wicket clerk has a separate account in his name;
- b) under no circumstances whatsoever does a wicket clerk have the right to keep any part of the surplus cash receipts;
- c) any surplus of \$5.00 or less is credited to the wicket clerk's account in what is known as the post office "surplus cash fund";
- d) a surplus of more than \$5.00 must be reported to Headquarters;
- e) every shortage must be repaid in full by the clerk responsible. Shortages of \$5.00 or less may be made good from the amount to his credit in the surplus cash fund;
- f) however, the total amount to his credit may not exceed \$25.00 because the rule requires that any surplus balance over this amount must be reported to Headquarters. No clerk ever has more than this sum to his credit in his individual surplus account.

We can easily understand why the Department cannot allow all cash surpluses to be credited to the clerk. Such a policy would be contrary to the public interest. Moreover, the same policy applies in the private sector, particularly in banks. We believe, however, that the Department should raise from \$5.00 to \$10.00 the amount of shortage which may be repaid through surpluses, especially

if the Guarantee Fund is to be used only for the restricted purposes now in effect.<sup>1/</sup>

The Department could moreover, without serious inconvenience, raise from \$25.00 to \$50.00 the amount permitted as the maximum credit possible to the wicket clerk's individual surplus account. It could also allow a clerk two or three days to raise the money to repay a non-fraudulent shortage.

(4) The wicket clerks undergo fairly regular audit team inspections.

Some have complained that they are not always informed of the errors uncovered by these inspections.

There is a contradiction here which we cannot understand. The Department claims that the audit inspection teams are required to obtain the signature of each wicket clerk on the audit report. If this is so, how can the clerk be unaware of his errors? The Department adds that according to its directives every error must be discussed with the clerk and irregularities are always brought to the attention of the postmaster who, in turn, clears the matter up with the clerk.

(5) Wicket clerks, except in certain cases, are held accountable for any stolen money orders they cash, or counterfeit money they accept.

The Department draws up a list of stolen money orders in numerical order and insists that clerks consult this list every time they cash a money order. If it does not appear on the list, the clerk is not held responsible provided he has checked the identity of the person, the correct amount inscribed and the date on which the stamp was affixed. Each case of counterfeit money accepted is studied on the basis of the quality of the counterfeit, the volume of business at the time the money was handled, previous incidents, if any, etc.

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<sup>1/</sup> See Chapter 28, "Guarantee Fund".

On the whole, we approve this method of assessing responsibility provided that the rules are not hard and fast and that each case is dealt with on its own merit. From now on, clerks will be able to make use of the grievance procedure if they are held responsible by the Department when they do not feel they should be.

(6) As a general rule, the Department requires clerks to check their till as soon as it reaches \$250.00. The Department admits that they do not always have the time to do so during normal working hours and that it is more difficult for them to trace an error after a prolonged length of time has elapsed.

We are under the impression that the vast majority of wicket clerks organize their work accordingly and overcome these difficulties without too much inconvenience.

(7) Clerks are sometimes told to take deposits to the bank. This happens only when the supervisor cannot do so himself. In our opinion, any clerk should be free to accept or refuse this task, because of the risk involved.

(8) The clerks suggest that wickets close at 5:30 p.m. at the latest, instead of 6:00 p.m.

The Department does not believe this is possible. In large urban centres the public is insisting that closing time be extended after 6:00 p.m. and the Department has acceded to some of these requests. It must be recognized that the trend today is towards later closing for commercial establishments on some weekdays.

(9) The clerks in some smaller post offices object to having to take two hours for lunch.

The Department understands, stating that these are exceptional cases. Normally wicket clerks work eight hours within a nine-hour period. However, this rule cannot always be followed in smaller post offices while, at the same

time, maintaining a satisfactory standard of postal service. In such cases, the work is carried out over a ten-hour period.

The Department should stop this practice and find other ways and means to resolve this problem.

(10) Several other minor problems were discussed, e.g., wicket clerks should be exempt from all sorting duties, so that they can always be available to the public, and should not answer telephone calls during peak periods.

We believe that these problems and others of the same nature can be solved amicably after discussions at the local joint committee level.

There is one problem, however, which will be settled soon: the Department is going to leave it to the patron to ask for parcel insurance. Clerks will no longer have to offer this insurance. The Department, however, refuses to discontinue the practice of supplying receipts for parcels valued at less than \$1.00 because patrons are not entitled to any indemnity without proof of mailing.

Frequent references were made, by way of comparison, to the working conditions of bank tellers.

Their situation seems different in many ways. The individual amount handled, the frequency of transactions, and the volume handled by tellers are far greater than that of wicket clerks. In a large office such as Toronto, the total cash transactions during the 1965 Christmas rush averaged only \$200.00 per clerk per day.

WE RECOMMEND:

218. That the Department ensure that all regulations affecting wicket clerks are adhered to, not only by postmasters and supervisors, but by the staff of its audit inspection teams.
219. That the Department increase from \$5.00 to \$10.00 the maximum amount which may be credited to a clerk's account out of his surpluses or excess cash.

- 220. That the Department continue to allow a clerk's shortages to be offset from his own account in the surplus cash fund, but that the maximum be raised from \$5.00 to \$10.00.
- 221. That the credit balance permissible in any clerk's individual account be raised from \$25.00 to \$50.00.
- 222. That a clerk be allowed two or three days to obtain funds needed to cover large deficits of a non-fraudulent nature.
- 223. That clerks be free to accept or refuse when asked to take deposits to the bank.
- 224. That wicket service be discontinued or reduced to a minimum in post offices where revenue between the hours of 5:30 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. is insufficient to meet the cost of staffing.
- 225. That other problems of lesser importance be solved locally after discussions at the local joint committee level.

## CHAPTER 28

### GUARANTEE FUND

Under section 5(1) (L) of the Post Office Act, the Postmaster General may "establish and maintain a fund derived from moneys received from postal employees and pay out of the fund losses sustained by reason of the default or neglect of any postal employee or mail contractor in carrying out his duties in any matter relating to the Canada Post Office".

In 1900 the Postmaster General availed himself of this provision for the first time and the Department became more or less the underwriter for employees, postmasters and contractors against the risks mentioned above.

In 1919, it was noted that the fund's reserves had reached \$300,000.00 and that the interest earned was more than enough to meet all losses. It was decided to discontinue the payment of premiums.

This requires further explanation.

The Department states that the books, at that time, showed a deficit of \$9,835.58 as compared to the total contributions paid by the employees, while there was a substantial surplus in payments from postmasters and contractors. When a guarantee fund is supported by the contributions of three separate groups, one can expect under the circumstances one of these groups to profit to a greater extent than another, even to the point of withdrawals exceeding contributions. One must bear in mind that the wicket clerks, for example, among all post office employees by the very nature of their work, are by far the most likely to make mistakes. This could be due to ordinary human errors or distractions.

In 1950, the Parliamentary Committee on Public Accounts expressed the opinion that the indemnities and compensations paid for losses occurring in the processing of the different types of mail, theft, counterfeit money, fraudulent withdrawals from the savings bank, or other misappropriations of the same nature should be considered as costs payable directly from the normal receipts of the Post Office Department and should not be charged to the guarantee fund.

This point of view was very defensible. Indeed, this is not the important question but what ensued which appears highly questionable.

Following this expression of opinion by the Parliamentary Committee on Public Accounts, discussions were held between the Departments of Finance, Justice and Post Office, resulting in a change of policy regarding future claims against the guarantee fund.

In 1953, it was considered logical and reasonable that charges against the guarantee fund be made only in cases of substantial losses due solely to the malfeasance of either a postmaster, an employee or a mail contractor. Even in these cases, it was decided that the fund would not be charged unless the person responsible was incapable of covering the losses.

We could not establish positively that this change in policy was discussed with the staff organizations. We strongly suspect that it was not. Perhaps this was because they had not contributed to the guarantee fund for the past 35 years, perhaps also because the benefits employees had received between 1900 and 1917 exceeded their contributions by almost \$10,000.

One fact is evident: this change in policy was decided without amending section 5(1) (L) of the Post Office Act.

During our investigation, and even if today there are probably only a few employees left who have contributed to the guarantee fund, we were asked to give an opinion on the whole problem.

The change in policy adopted in 1953 has obviously restricted the scope of this section. As evidence one needs only to point out that it once referred to "losses sustained by reason of the default or neglect" of an employee, whereas now the only mention made is that the fund covers only "substantial" losses resulting "solely" from "malfeasance". These are far more than simple shades of meaning.

Section 5(1) (L) of the Act allows the Postmaster General full discretion on the establishment and maintenance of a guarantee fund. He may reach the conclusion, as we have, that the restrictions now in force are contrary to both the letter and intent of this section. If so, he may care to go one step further and consult the leaders of the staff organizations to determine if this fund should be re-established within the legal authority provided for in this section. We do not contemplate the possibility that the Postmaster General will liquidate the guarantee fund, outright. Such action would not be to anyone's advantage even if the fund is to serve only the limited purposes derived from the change of policy.

The national leaders of the staff organizations must realize that the re-establishment of a guarantee fund to protect employees against their own "default" or "neglect" will mean the compulsory payment of rather large premiums to maintain the fund on a solvent basis.

WE RECOMMEND:

226. That the Postmaster General decide if it is advisable to exercise the discretionary powers granted him by section 5(1) (L) of the Post Office Act and to re-establish, or not, the guarantee fund along the legal authority given in this section.
227. That, on the basis of his decision, the Postmaster General discuss with the national leaders of the staff organizations all aspects and implications of establishing and maintaining a guarantee fund for the protection of postal employees against losses arising from default or neglect in the carrying out of their duties.

These recommendations should not prevent the staff organizations from carrying out a study of other possible means of protection for the employees against the same (or other) risks as those mentioned in section 5(1) (L) of the Act. The Department should have no objection.

We must admit that many problems will arise:

- a) in many cases the company which will be the guarantor for each postal employee will probably insist on the right to demand reimbursement by the employee;
- b) this company will likely insist on being released from its obligations if the total claims go beyond a certain amount or if cash deficits occur too frequently;
- c) the premiums will surely be proportional to the amount of postal values entrusted to the employee.

It is not for us to dwell on this matter, nor to recommend any action whatever.

One single suggestion does come to mind: the national leaders of the staff organizations should not take any action on either one of these measures for the protection of employees without first carrying out a referendum among their members.

P A R T   V

P R O B L E M S   O F   P A R T I C U L A R

I N T E R E S T   T O   L E T T E R   C A R R I E R S



## CHAPTER 29

### WALKS AND CHECKS

(1) The Department attempts to lay out a letter carrier's walk in such a way that the work to be done on his route, added to his daily duties inside the post office or postal station, are carried out within a 40-hour week.

This is not an easy task.

Many factors must be taken into consideration to lay out a walk on a basis as equitable as possible. Each walk has its own distinctive characteristics. The main ones, but by no means the only ones, are:

- a) the topography of the route;
- b) its length;
- c) the distance between the post office and the starting point of the walk;
- d) the number of steps on stairways;
- e) the distance of homes from the sidewalk;
- f) the nature and volume of the mail which varies from day to day;
- g) the percentage of stops made during delivery;
- h) the public transportation schedules;
- i) the type and number of apartment and commercial buildings to be served, etc.

We shall not discuss unpredictable climatic conditions in the extreme which vary from one area of the country to another. Weather does not alter the layout of a walk, but it affects the number of hours the letter carrier takes to complete his route.

To alleviate the many problems affecting a walk, the Department, twice a year, has a check carried out by the letter carrier himself who then submits a report.<sup>1/</sup> It also authorizes, throughout the year and at the letter carrier's request, "supervised" checks carried out by a third party (usually a supervisory letter carrier) to determine whether changes are necessary.

Letter carriers have criticized the whole system, calling it unrealistic. Others objected to the delays they were subjected to before obtaining a supervised check. All, or nearly all, to the astonishment of some district directors and postmasters, reproached the Department for setting any value on the carriers' semi-annual self-checks, explaining that, to keep out of trouble, they submit reports which are not too accurate.

The Department advised our Commission of its intention to undertake, without delay, a complete review of each walk by trained experts who, with the participation and co-operation of the letter carrier concerned, will analyse all the peculiarities of the walk and will endeavour to lay it out in a more realistic manner.

This task will take several months to complete as there are almost 7,200 routes to check. This is essential, nevertheless, and if properly carried out should provide excellent results.

Once the necessary adjustments are made, the Department will be able to do away with the semi-annual "self-checks" and will depend on "supervised checks" when warranted by changes, either in the opinion of the letter carriers concerned or of the Department.

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<sup>1/</sup> The Department categorically denies any intervention aiming either at reducing the volume of mail during these twice-yearly checks or at amending the statistics submitted by a letter carrier in his report. If this were so, it states it would not hesitate to deal severely with offenders.

It would be best to follow the same procedure, adapting it to circumstances, in the establishment of new walks.

(2) Many letter carriers suggested they should return to the post office, after completion of their walks.

We reject this suggestion for several reasons:

a) First of all, we have the impression that the majority of letter carriers would not care for this because they appreciate the privilege they have been given of returning home, except in a few cases, as soon as the last letter is delivered. In all fairness, we must admit that there are a few months in the year (particularly in the summer, when the volume of mail is low) when a letter carrier finishes his day early. Some take advantage of this situation to take on various outside jobs to earn extra money.

b) For all practical purposes, the obligation to return to the post office may mean nothing more than time lost returning to punch the clock and then leaving immediately.

c) It may also mean that the Department will insist, once they are back at the post office, that they stay at work until the completion of their normal eight-hour day. But we are told that in many post offices it would be impossible to find work related to their duties. If this is possible we have the impression that some letter carriers, if not most of them, will give in to a very human temptation and not return until the last minute.

d) Returning to the post office will probably involve additional checking on the part of the Department and create unnecessary expenditures.

e) Finally, we are inclined to think that the letter carriers who made this suggestion were looking for a way of getting around the difficulty, if not the impossibility, they now encounter of being paid overtime for work done

beyond their normal hours. For reasons given further on in the Report,<sup>1/</sup> we do not think that the problem of overtime should necessarily be connected with their compulsory return to the post office at the end of each day.

(3) The Department allows any letter carrier to start his work inside the post office 20 minutes before the official starting time. They are not paid for this time as it is not considered part of their normal working day.

In its submission in April 1966 the Letter Carriers' Union states that this extra 20 minutes is simply a "gift" from the letter carriers and that this practice should cease immediately.

We hesitate to agree with this proposal. This is far more the free and voluntary decision of each one concerned rather than a "gift". No one is forcing the letter carrier to take advantage of these extra 20 minutes. If he does, it is because he chooses to do so. Several letter carriers have explained the reason behind their decision: some feel that these extra 20 minutes allow them to work without rushing, others are older carriers who have difficulty in keeping up the sorting pace and thus gain precious time in processing the mail for their relay boxes. In some localities, it was alleged that some letter carriers use this extra time to be rated by their supervisors as more zealous employees. It was insinuated that these employees became the favourites or that they saw it as a means of obtaining promotion. Needless to say, the Department denies being involved in any such methods.

The letter carriers alone can settle this problem among themselves, at the local level. We do not want to become involved, even less, to recommend that the Department adopt regulations which will no longer allow any latitude to anyone. The Letter Carriers' Union will not, in this manner, stop abuses, if there are any.

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<sup>1/</sup> See Chapter 33, entitled "Overtime for Letter Carriers".

(4) Carriers recommended some changes in the methods of planning the walks, such as dividing them into five distinct categories or "squaring" them to reduce their length. We do not think that hard and fast rules can be applied. It would be better if the Department and the Letter Carriers' Union, at the national joint committee level, make every effort to agree to some basic criteria which could be used at the local level.

WE RECOMMEND:

228. That the Department undertake, with all possible dispatch, a complete review of each walk by trained experts.
229. That in each case this review be made with the participation and co-operation of the letter carrier concerned.
230. That once this review is completed, the twice-yearly "self-checks" be abolished and that "supervised" checks by trained experts take place only when necessary.
231. That the Department and the Letter Carriers' Union, at the national joint committee level, attempt to reach an agreement on the basic criteria required to establish walks and that these criteria be followed as much as possible in evaluating each walk at the local level.
232. That letter carriers not be compelled to return to the post office at the end of each day, except in cases already provided for in present directives and in cases mentioned in Chapter 33 on "Overtime for Letter Carriers".
233. That the authority now given by the Department to letter carriers to start work 20 minutes before the official starting time not be rescinded, but that the carriers themselves, in each post office, if they deem it advisable, decide by majority vote their stand in this matter.

## CHAPTER 30

### MAIL SORTING

(1) The letter carriers spent a great deal of time explaining why they oppose the alphabetical system of mail sorting referred to as the "ABC system" now in use. They prefer the "line of delivery" system in use several years ago.

With the alphabetical system, the sorting case is labelled according to the first letter of each street name. One section of the case is reserved for each street included in the letter carrier's walk. House numbers are shown above each case separation in delivery order. A coding system is used on the label to indicate the sequence in which the letter carrier withdraws mail from his case in accordance with the route pattern.

In the "line of delivery" system, the case is labelled in the exact order followed by the letter carrier along his route; so the mail is drawn in the same order, i.e., directly and consecutively, without the need of a code.

The Letter Carriers' Union claims that the alphabetical method was forced upon the letter carriers in 1963 after a trial period in a few localities, and that it has always been opposed to it because of the greater risks of error when the letter carrier ties out his mail for delivery.

The Department prefers the alphabetical system. It finds many advantages, including the following:

- a) The case, divided in two parts, allows two employees to work at the same time, thereby helping the regular letter carrier.
- b) Supervisors can locate addresses more easily.

- c) Sick relief carriers and casual employees, although unfamiliar with the case, sort the mail without difficulty. It is particularly useful, therefore, during the Christmas period when there is no time for an extended period of training.
- d) Checks carried out in Montreal and Toronto have convinced the Department that this system is more economical than the line of delivery system with regard to cost and labour, as well as time.

The Department concedes that the alphabetical system also has its disadvantages:

- a) It agrees with the carriers that the mail is not "pulled out" from the separation cases and tied out as quickly. But it claims that this inconvenience is more than offset by the speed of the simpler "ABC system".
- b) The Department agrees that this "pull out" and "tying out" require more constant attention on the part of the carriers since morning and afternoon deliveries are mixed. However, it feels that the order of delivery, identified by different colour schemes on the cases in the ABC system, reduces the risks of error and does not interfere with a reasonable check by supervisors.
- c) The Department agrees that the layout and labelling of the alphabetical sorting case are more complex and require more work than the "line of delivery" sorting case does.

Besides the fact that the Department and the Union do not agree with the facts and circumstances which led to the adoption of the alphabetical sorting system, we face a rather serious difference of opinion and we prefer to leave it to the parties concerned to settle it, once and for all. The opportunity will arise shortly with collective bargaining, even though the Department considers this matter to be one of determination of a work method, therefore non-negotiable.

Nevertheless, we suggest that the present alphabetical system be retained

because its rejection could seriously compromise the implementation of our recommendations on annual vacations. Since the letter carriers recognize the usefulness of the alphabetical sorting system during the Christmas period it will probably prove just as useful from June 15 to September 15.<sup>1/</sup>

(2) Several other points deserve to be considered:

- a) The Department and the Union find that newspapers and periodicals are more rapidly sorted with the "line of delivery" system when using a separate case. This practice is already followed at several locations. If this is so, we feel that it should be extended wherever carriers so request.
- b) If the alphabetical sorting system remains, wing-type sorting cases should replace the straight-faced cases as soon as possible, since field tests have shown that the former reduce fatigue and make the reading of the labels easier.
- c) Walks should be adjusted to conform more readily to this type of case and labels should always be typed in large letters.
- d) The Department should urge municipalities to avoid giving the same name to different streets.

WE RECOMMEND:

234. That the alphabetical mail sorting system be retained for the time being.
235. That serious efforts be made by both parties to settle differences of opinion concerning this system.
236. That "line of delivery" sorting cases, for magazines and periodicals, be installed whenever carriers so request.
237. That no effort be spared to improve the alphabetical sorting system (if it is to be retained) in order to make it more acceptable to the letter carriers, e.g., wing-type cases, better layout of walks, elimination of identical street names, etc.

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<sup>1/</sup> See Chapter 13, section 1, "Vacation Leave".

## CHAPTER 31

### DELIVERY OF MAIL

The main grievances regarding daily delivery of mail refer, in general, to weight, volume, dimension and the variety of mail matter.

#### 1. Maximum weight

In its brief of April 13, 1966, the Letter Carriers' Union recommends that the maximum weight which a letter carrier has to carry should not exceed 25 pounds. The Department has no set rule. It considers that a maximum of 35 pounds is reasonable but it does not think it is necessary to issue a directive along these lines. A letter carrier is always entitled to make a complaint to his supervisor if he considers the weight excessive and the supervisor has the authority to remedy the situation on the spot. Instructions to this effect have been issued. They are, however, a source of frequent conflict. Opinions with regard to what does or does not constitute an excessive weight are often divided and are the subject of lively, disagreeable, and sometimes bitter discussions.

The Department states that if the weight occasionally exceeds 35 pounds it is offset by the great number of times when it is less. We do not accept this line of reasoning.

A maximum weight should be established, regardless of the number of relay boxes available to the letter carrier, or the new methods of laying out and checking walks, which the Department intends to adopt.<sup>1/</sup>

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1/ See Chapter 29, "Walks and Checks".

WE RECOMMEND:

238. That the Department set 35 pounds as the maximum weight of mail any letter carrier should be required to carry.

2. Relay boxes

Letter carriers have at their disposal along their walks relay boxes located at strategic points. Before leaving the post office they sort and deposit a good part of their mail in "relay bags". Trucks transport these bags to the relay boxes where the letter carrier picks up his mail and proceeds with its delivery according to the established line of delivery.

The purpose of these boxes is twofold:

- a) to accelerate delivery by maintaining a regular flow of mail; and
- b) to ease the task of the letter carriers and obviate the need for frequent returns to the post office to pick up the mail intended for the next stage of their walks.

Number of relay boxes

The number of relay boxes is thus related to the problem of weight. Each letter carrier has an average of four or five relay boxes on his walk.

This, really, should not be a matter of averages since each walk has its own peculiarities. The Department does not deny this and states that district directors and postmasters can increase the number of relay boxes if necessary. The fact remains that several letter carriers told us that they had not obtained satisfaction. Here again, we are faced with differences of opinion with regard to the subjective evaluation of a requirement.

Transportation of mail to relay boxes

Some letter carriers believe that the Department should give them more time to prepare their relay bags. The Department holds the view that it cannot establish uniform departure schedules throughout the country because the volume and

the time of arrival of the mail vary from one locality to another. The relay bags must be prepared as soon as possible after the arrival of the letter carriers at the post office, otherwise, the latter may have to wait at the relay boxes, thereby causing a delay in the final stage of delivery.

We are under the impression that the real problem does not lie here. Many carriers claimed that some contractors, responsible for the transportation of the relay bags, have a tendency to reduce the number of trucks available for this purpose. The Department stated that the number of trucks does not depend, and should not depend, on the whim of the contractors, but entirely on the volume of work and distance. Contracts signed by the contractors do not give them any choice: they also assume the obligation to supply all additional trucks that may be required. We suggest that the representatives of the staff organizations take note of these remarks and notify the Department if any abuse in this connection occurs in any place. The Department assured our Commission that it would make sure such abuses are corrected without delay.

Snow clearing

The directives of the Department do not specify who is responsible for snow removal around relay boxes.

Since these boxes usually are located on municipal property the Department seeks the co-operation of the municipal services in charge of snow removal. It is not always successful and it recognizes that it has the responsibility to find a more efficient method.

WE RECOMMEND:

239. That postmasters ensure that each letter carrier has a sufficient number of relay boxes on his walk, and, if not, that immediate steps be taken to remedy the situation.

240. That the postmasters ensure that the contractors responsible for the transportation of mail to the relay boxes carry out their obligations to the letter, especially with regard to the number of trucks required and the hours of departure from the post offices in the morning.

241. That the Department take the necessary measures to have the snow removed around the relay boxes.

3. Rates

The Post Office Act<sup>1/</sup> entrusts Parliament with the task of setting certain postage rates, such as the rates on letters, and on newspapers and periodicals which are considered first and second class mail matter. Other rates come under the jurisdiction of the Postmaster General.<sup>2/</sup> He sets fees for registered mail, special delivery, C.O.D.'s, money orders and also parcel rates.

The Department pointed out that the classification of mail and the setting of rates could not be considered as working conditions.

We never believed it was otherwise and we do not hesitate to agree that these matters do not come within our mandate. However, even if employees must be willing to handle and deliver all mail matter, regardless of the rate or class, it does not mean that the Department should disregard suggestions which, even in this area, may improve the working conditions, welfare and morale of its operating staff.

The letter carriers associate the matter of postal rates with that of excessive loads, therefore they suggest the revision of the regulations concerning bulky commercial samples they have to carry, and which are mentioned further on in this chapter.<sup>3/</sup>

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1/ Sections 10, 11 and 12.

2/ Section 6, Post Office Act.

3/ See section 5.

Obviously, some problems are more ticklish, for instance:

- a) Letter carriers discussed Saturday work and suggested that a priority class of mail be set up and be the only class delivered on Saturdays.<sup>1/</sup>
- b) Postal employees claimed that the rates on third class mail (printed matter and commercial samples) were not sufficient to cover its handling cost. They recommended a uniform rate, higher than the present one, and that the additional revenue be used to improve physical working conditions and distribution methods.
- c) Nearly everyone criticized the cost involved in the handling of second class mail which amounts to \$30 million more than the revenue derived from it.

It should be noted that on April 1, 1964, the Department increased the rates on third class mail and that it does not see the need for a further increase at the present time. The funds required for the operation of the Department come either from postal revenue or from moneys voted by Parliament, if the latter considers it necessary to subsidize a particular category of mail.

- d) Employees raised some questions on foreign postal rates.

In a few countries postal revenues are considered to be a legitimate source of revenue, in others, the postal service is a public utility subsidized through the over-all budget. Elsewhere, postal administrations try to meet their own expenses. Even in such cases, rates differ from country to country depending on the quality of the service, the state of the economy, the cost of labour, etc. In the United States the law recognizes some sections of the postal service as a public service and adjustments are made in revenue and in increased expenditures, without considering the losses and expenditures attributable to these adjustments.

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<sup>1/</sup> See Chapter 10, section 2, "Week-end Work".

WE RECOMMEND:

242. That Headquarters make sure that postmasters comply with existing instructions dealing with the order of priority for classes of mail, especially regarding the leeway allowed to classes other than first class mail.

4. Parcel post

The directives from the Department state that items weighing over two pounds or having a volume exceeding 150 cubic inches are to be delivered by truck. To reach this weight or this volume certain combinations are allowed. Thus, it allows two or more mail items intended for the same address to be bundled. If these items exceed the limit and in his opinion become a burden, the letter carrier may ask permission to have this mail consigned to parcel post delivery.

Evidently, there are postmasters and supervisors who do not like to compromise and who insist on checking the smallest detail to avoid these combinations. There is room here for a little more common sense and concern for the welfare of the employee; after all, these concessions do not harm the postal service or in any way affect the patrons.

WE RECOMMEND:

243. That postmasters interpret more generously the directives on delivery by parcel post of mail matter exceeding two pounds or where the volume exceeds 150 cubic inches and that it be so for all possible combinations of these items.

5. Second and third class mail

(1) The Department requires letter carriers to deliver all the mail irrespective of class and has the right to do so in so far and as long as the Post Office Act and the Regulations remain unchanged.<sup>1/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> See section 3.

Nevertheless, letter carriers feel no pride whatever in delivering certain categories of mail, e.g., circulars, catalogues with or without addresses, directories, free samples, etc.

Apart from being a source of revenue, the Department considers it is its responsibility to provide this service. We shall not argue the point but it is reasonable to presume that the letter carriers be entitled to overtime remuneration if they are required to work overtime in order to meet all the requirements of the Department. This matter is discussed in Chapter 33.<sup>1/</sup>

(2) There is, however, a particular aspect of the problem which should be mentioned. The Department accepts as mail matter samples of some products of industrial or commercial establishments which the latter want to distribute to the public.<sup>2/</sup> These samples, which are sometimes bulky, cause an unnecessary burden to the letter carriers and we believe that they should not be considered as mail matter with which the Canada Post Office should be concerned.

(3) The fact that carriers have to handle the delivery of second or third class mail, as if it were first class, affects their working hours.

The Department considers the time element of prime importance in the case of some publications. Daily newspapers and weekly magazines are processed and delivered as expeditiously as possible, without, however, affording them the same treatment as first class mail. Publishers and subscribers expect prompt delivery. The Department states that failure to do so would lead to numerous complaints. Some newspapers already have published editorials concerning the irregular delivery of their copy.

The Department states that third class mail (printed matter and trade samples) comes under a totally different regulation: it allows a margin of 24 hours

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1/ See Chapter 33, "Overtime for Letter Carriers".

2/ Trade samples such as soaps, toothpastes, cereals, etc.

for the processing of this class of mail as compared with one or two hours for first class. The Department further emphasizes that supervisors may authorize letter carriers to delay the delivery of third class items when the volume of first class mail is clearly above normal. It admits, however, that this situation differs from one locality to another because, within the limits of some defined priorities, the postmaster, at his discretion, decides on the manner in which the various classes of mail are to be processed.

WE RECOMMEND:

244. That the Department review its policy concerning the delivery of bulky trade samples.
245. That the Department remind postmasters to be more flexible in the degree of priority afforded second and third class mail.

6. Two deliveries a day

The letter carriers, supported by the postal clerks, suggest that the Department re-establish the system of two deliveries per day in residential areas.

This system was abolished in 1951, because the small quantity of mail to be delivered in the afternoon could no longer justify its continuation. Since then, the Department has studied its re-establishment on several occasions. It assures the Commission that the situation has not changed in any appreciable manner, and that the advantages resulting from it, for a restricted number of patrons, could not justify the prohibitive cost involved in returning to the two-delivery system.<sup>1/</sup> Even though it is true that the walks of the letter carriers would necessarily be shortened, they would theoretically, all factors being considered, always be required to cover the same total distance and to work an average of

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<sup>1/</sup> According to the Department, a return to the system of two deliveries per day would mean an additional cost of over \$15 million per year.

eight hours per day. As far as the postal clerks are concerned they would benefit only in so far as the Department would revise its policy on time schedules, which, as we have already pointed out,<sup>1/</sup> is based upon the arrival and departure schedules of air, railway and road transportation.

In the light of these circumstances we do not recommend any change.

#### 7. Changes of address

Letter carriers complain about the cost and additional work required by the double delivery and the double sorting of improperly addressed mail matter.

We have already taken a position on the subject of postage rates.<sup>2/</sup>

We cannot see how the letter carriers can avoid this additional work. It should be emphasized, as a matter of information, that the Department sees no need to deal too rigorously with the patron who has neglected to notify his correspondent of his change of address within the 90 days time limit prescribed by the Postal Guide. The Department further declares that the proposal made by the letter carriers to charge the patron an additional amount would not lessen their work since they themselves would have to collect the postage due from the addressee.

#### WE RECOMMEND:

246. That a maximum time limit of more than 90 days if necessary but not more than 180 days be rigorously enforced, in future, for changes of address.

#### 8. Interpretation of regulations

Without enumerating all other grievances presented by the letter carriers, i.e., two addresses on the same mail matter (street and post office box number), redirected mail, or sending bags to the relay boxes in the afternoon, it seems

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1/ See Chapter 10, "The Work Week".

2/ See section 3.

obvious, after discussion with the Department, many of these are the result of an erroneous or too rigorous interpretation of rules by the local authorities.

The period of a rather sudden transition, in recent years, from one of centralization to one of delegation of a good degree of authority and responsibility to local and regional management of the field operating services has created some problems. We would like to say, once more, that better training and more experience will lead to a better understanding, by all levels of administration, of the immense advantages of maintaining good staff relations with all personnel, and to the use of its discretionary powers bearing in mind the welfare of the employees. The constant recourse to consultation and exchange of views through local joint committees and, if necessary, to the new grievance procedure will also be an important factor in the solution of these problems.<sup>1/</sup>

#### Address labels

Many letter carriers are of the opinion that address labels for magazines and circulars are not large enough to write changes of address legibly. The Department believes it would not be reasonable to expect the publishers to replace these labels, because they have invested considerable sums in the necessary equipment.

#### Mail to "occupant"

In some localities, letter carriers were critical of mail items which carry not only the recipient's address but also "or occupant" on the envelope. Regulations require that the mail be delivered to whoever is resident at the indicated address. Letter carriers say this is a bone of contention with the "occupants". The latter think that they are being "forced" to accept mail which is not really intended for them.

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<sup>1/</sup> See Chapter 4, "General Impressions".

The Department insists on maintaining the current practice. This is its prerogative and we can do nothing about it. Letter carriers must accept this policy even though it may cause some hardship. The abolition of the "or occupant" mail delivery would leave only three alternatives: return the item to the mailer if he so requests, dispose of it in the "Undeliverable Mail Office", or redirect the item to the new address of the addressee. All these alternatives would be costly for the Department. They would also make more work for employees, apart from the fact that the mailers would not have the benefit of a service they have paid for and to which they are therefore entitled.

Apartment buildings

The letter carriers want mailers to include the addressee's apartment number along with the street address. This problem has become more acute in recent years. Apartment buildings with one hundred or more suites are very much the trend. The presence of several families with the same surname does not make things any easier. The Department recognizes this problem and is endeavouring to find a practical solution.

WE RECOMMEND:

247. That the Department institute a campaign to educate the public on the regulations pertaining to the addressing of mail.

9. Miscellaneous

Suspension of delivery notification card

In carrying out their daily duties, the letter carriers often have to face difficulties or dangers for which they are in no way responsible: snow piled up on the sidewalk of homeowners, slippery steps, loose dogs, narrow slots in mail boxes, etc. The letter carriers suggest that they be allowed to drop a card into the mail box advising the patron of the reasons for non-delivery, instead of the

present and slower method of sending a personal letter from the postmaster.

This is an interesting suggestion as long as the Department is careful to word this card in precise terms. The public has its share of responsibility. The small minority who disregard the rules should not be allowed to get off scot-free all of the time.

Enquiries

The Department sometimes requests letter carriers to question patrons in order to obtain information unrelated to the postal service. These requests are unjustified since they cannot be related either directly or indirectly to their normal duties.

Classification of mail

At Ottawa, employees suggested that federal departments give greater care to the classification of mail in different classes, in accordance with the Postal Guide.

The Post Office Department recently notified all departments accordingly.

WE RECOMMEND:

248. That the Department put to the test suspension of delivery notification cards in cases of non-delivery of mail.
249. That postmasters and supervisors take into account requests by the letter carriers, when they recommend suspension of mail delivery to a patron who continually ignores departmental regulations.
250. That the Department no longer request letter carriers to make enquiries of the patrons, when such enquiries are not related to the postal service proper.
251. That all federal departments give very clear instructions to their personnel on the classification and use of various classes of mail.

## CHAPTER 32

### MAILMOBILES

The Department uses jeeps to deliver the mail in some suburban, business, and industrial areas where the volume of mail and distances make delivery on foot completely impractical.

In all likelihood, this mode of delivery will continue to expand.

(1) The Department claims to be in constant contact with the jeep manufacturers. Through experience and consultation, it has obtained their agreement that recently acquired vehicles should be better adapted to this type of delivery and be equipped with the necessary safety features.

(2) The Department has made arrangements with private companies regarding maintenance. It admits that in certain localities the results have been less than satisfactory. The Department has now been authorized by Treasury Board to deal exclusively with the manufacturers' authorized repair centres. Negotiations with them are now under way. There is every reason to believe that, shortly, maintenance and repair services will be faster and of a higher quality.

(3) The Department has also informed the Commission that it intends to replace a good number of its older vehicles in the current year. This news certainly will be welcomed by many letter carriers.

(4) We are concerned, however, about those used vehicles which will be operated for some time to come but which are not in the best of working condition and which are not as well equipped as the newer vehicles.

The Department would do well to undertake, immediately, a complete and detailed inspection of these vehicles and, if necessary, allocate to the district

directors or postmasters any additional funds required to have essential repairs made and to have installed any equipment which is absolutely necessary.

(5) It was suggested that letter carriers who operate mailmobiles should be paid a premium of 15 cents per hour.

The Department claims:

- a) that these extra responsibilities are already included in the standard duties for this class of letter carrier;
- b) that they have been taken into account in the present pay structure;
- c) that the use of a mailmobile results in less physical effort than delivery on foot.

Whether or not these claims are valid, we feel that these letter carriers assume additional responsibilities which deserve due consideration. However, we are not convinced that a differential of some sort is a desirable solution. There should be a careful review made of the job classification and a readjustment of <sup>1/</sup> the basic wage if it is considered justified.

(6) When a "foot walk" is changed to a "jeep route", the Department usually offers it to the letter carrier with the most seniority, provided he knows how to drive. Some letter carriers have suggested that first choice should be given to the carrier on that particular walk.

We do not support this proposal. The Department is quite right in acting as it does, since it is respecting the seniority rights.

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1/ We remind those letter carriers who are concerned regarding their responsibility toward third party liability in the event of an accident that the regulations adopted by virtue of the Crown Liability Act (R.S., 1952/53, c.30) protect them. However, these regulations permit the Crown, when it has compensated a third party, to claim repayment of a part of this indemnity from the employee to a maximum of \$250.00.

WE RECOMMEND:

252. That the Department immediately undertake a detailed inspection of mailmobiles, especially those that have been in operation for a year or more.
253. That these inspections take place in the presence and with the assistance of at least one representative of the Letter Carriers' Union.
254. That in every case where it is deemed necessary, the Department allocate to the district directors or postmasters any additional funds required to have essential repairs made and equipment installed when absolutely required.
255. That the Bureau of Classification Revision examine carefully the classification of mailmobile drivers.

## CHAPTER 33

### OVERTIME FOR LETTER CARRIERS

(1) Of all the problems of particular interest to the letter carriers, none is more important than overtime.

We have already pointed out several difficulties they must face. To some extent, these are beyond their control or that of the Department. <sup>1/</sup> The varying volume of mail and weather conditions are the two major difficulties.

Therefore, with the exception of the Christmas period, after a walk check, or the day after a statutory holiday, letter carriers do not, as a rule, receive any overtime pay.

This is not normal and we do not accept the Department's claim that the light months of the year offset the heavy ones.

#### WE RECOMMEND:

256. That letter carriers be entitled to overtime whenever the volume of mail to be delivered is heavier than usual or if weather conditions are abnormal, unfavourable, or difficult and they have to work overtime.

This recommendation shows our great confidence in the inborn honesty of letter carriers. We are giving them the same confidence which the Department shows during the Christmas period when it does not require them to return to the office on the same day to report their overtime. The purpose of our recommendation is

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<sup>1/</sup> See Chapter 29, "Walks and Checks", and Chapter 31, "Delivery of Mail".

to not leave to the sole judgment of a postmaster, district director or any other official at Headquarters, the responsibility to decide the effect of sudden or abnormal conditions on the daily task of a letter carrier.

We leave it to those concerned to reach an understanding on the procedure to be followed for the enforcement of this recommendation.

We would like to make a few suggestions, however.

- a) In the case of "abnormal, unfavourable or difficult weather conditions", we can easily see representatives of local branches asking the postmaster or his delegate to recognize such conditions prior to the departure of the letter carriers and to authorize, beforehand, the payment of the extra time they might have to take to deliver the mail.
- b) Failing an agreement, the local branch representatives merely request the postmaster or his delegate to take note of their representations.
- c) When the mail volume is "heavier than usual", the letter carrier concerned discusses it with his supervisor and puts forward his request. If it is refused then it should be done in writing.
- d) We think there is room for officials to show discretion in requesting letter carriers to return to the post office at the end of the day. But it is difficult to understand that such time is not counted as overtime. The Department will perhaps find this to be another reason for relying entirely on the carrier and accept that he register his overtime on the following day.
- e) Any problem created by this recommendation remaining without a solution, which would be acceptable to either side, can be submitted through the grievance procedure and, if need be, to final binding adjudication.
- f) To avoid any abuse by a very small minority, provision must be made for strict disciplinary action to be taken against any letter carrier who claims overtime, but fails to carry out his duties as he should.

(2) Our recommendation also applies to relieve supervisory letter carriers. These, however, have a different problem for the simple reason that they are not as familiar with the walks as the regular carriers. The Department admits there may be grounds for overtime in such cases. Under any other circumstances, it will not do so, claiming that the balance is re-established when other walks are completed in less than eight hours. It states furthermore that these additional responsibilities are taken into account in the higher pay scale for relief supervisory letter carriers.

In our opinion, the difference between the salary of the letter carrier and that of the supervisory letter carrier<sup>1/</sup> is not sufficient to compensate him for the overtime he has to put in. The main reason for a difference in salary is the wider knowledge needed to cover more than one walk.

WE RECOMMEND:

257. That relief supervisory letter carriers, besides being granted overtime under the same conditions as letter carriers, be entitled to overtime when they work additional hours because they are not as familiar with the walks as the regular letter carriers.

(3) Some letter carriers believe that they should be paid a proportional amount of overtime when the postal clerks work additional hours sorting mail.

An increase in the volume of processed mail does not necessarily mean an increase in the work of the letter carrier: instead of delivering only one item at a particular address, he may deliver several without necessarily taking any more time. Our recommendation, moreover, takes care of any problem related to any possible overload of work.

(4) On many occasions, some complaints were received on the practice of

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1/ This difference amounts to \$41.25 per month, at the maximum of the class.

stopping immediately payment of overtime for a walk where the need for overtime has already been recognized, as soon as the regular letter carrier leaves this walk and until the new incumbent has familiarized himself with the walk and is able to prove his own claims for overtime pay.

When a walk is recognized as being "with overtime", the Department should not disregard this fact solely because this walk has become available to other carriers. It recognizes this now and agrees to stop this practice: from now on, recognized overtime will be maintained in favour of the new letter carrier until the walk has been revised.

WE RECOMMEND:

258. That the Department immediately implement its new policy of approving recognized overtime for a walk in favour of a new letter carrier until the walk has been revised.

(5) Some letter carriers stated that they must arrive at the office 20 or 30 minutes before the official starting time to count and weigh the mail during supervised check weeks.

Headquarters does not approve and claims that this work is the responsibility of the supervisor in charge of the check. No letter carrier, therefore, has to arrive at his place of work before the official starting time. Should he be asked to do so, we believe that the right to overtime should then be recognized.

(6) When a letter carrier on a "jeep route" meets with an accident, a mechanical breakdown, a blowout, etc., he must wait until the approved contractor arrives to make the repairs or he takes other necessary steps.

It seems reasonable that this loss of time should be part of his normal working day and that any additional hours be counted as overtime.

WE RECOMMEND:

259. That a letter carrier on a "jeep route" be entitled to claim overtime whenever he is compelled to work overtime because of a mechanical breakdown or other mishap.

## CHAPTER 34

### DOGS

Pertinent, but unkind remarks have been made about dogs, those good friends of the letter carriers. In recent years an average of 600 dog-bites have been reported annually by the Post Office to the Department of Labour and certified as workmen's injuries of a more or less serious nature.

Letter carriers have suggested the use of a repellent similar to the one now available to carriers in the United States.

Without endorsing this suggestion fully, at this time, the Department promised to give it a trial in different localities and to obtain a report from the U.S. postal authorities on the effectiveness of this product. No doubt it will, and in due course, inform the Letter Carriers' Union of the results of its experiments and research in this connection and with its co-operation try to find as satisfactory a solution as possible.

In 1956, Headquarters issued precise instructions to clarify the procedure to be followed when a dog prevents a letter carrier from delivering the mail. If these instructions were always followed properly by supervisors, there would be fewer regrettable incidents and not so many grievances. One should not hesitate to suspend delivery of mail where any patron refuses or neglects to give adequate protection to the carrier against attacks from a vicious, dangerous, or menacing dog.

Headquarters intends to reissue its instructions soon through a formal directive.

WE RECOMMEND:

260. That postmasters and immediate supervisors rigorously comply with the instructions issued by Headquarters in 1956, to ensure that carriers receive all necessary protection against the ever-present possibility of being bitten while carrying out their duties.
261. That supervisors do not hesitate to discontinue the delivery of mail, immediately it becomes evident that a patron refuses or neglects to provide adequate protection to the carrier from the possible attacks of a vicious, dangerous, or menacing dog.
262. That postmasters maintain closer liaison with municipal authorities and require that all relevant by-laws be strictly enforced.
263. That Headquarters report, as soon as possible, on the results of its investigation into the advisability of making available to those letter carriers, who so wish, a repellent which would offer better protection against dogs and that, should the report prove favourable, a policy be adopted to that effect after agreement by the Letter Carriers' Union.

## CHAPTER 35

### SEASONAL CHANGES OF UNIFORM

Letter carriers want to be left free to change from their summer to their winter uniforms, or vice versa, as they see fit. At present this cannot be done without permission from the postmaster.

In Ottawa, for the last few months, the setting of the date for seasonal changes of uniforms has been left to the discretion of the carriers' immediate supervisors.

Headquarters has no objection to authorizing each carrier to decide for himself when he wants to make a seasonal change. It believes, however, that its policy regarding the wearing of the different seasonal hats should be maintained: some uniformity in appearance is desirable since it facilitates the identification of the carrier. We will not discuss this point further since we are convinced that letter carriers will be satisfied with the general attitude taken by the Department.

#### WE RECOMMEND:

264. That the Department issue a directive to the effect that each individual letter carrier make his own decision regarding the date for seasonal changes of uniforms, except regarding the wearing of the hats.

P A R T   V I

PROBLEMS   OF   PARTICULAR   INTEREST

TO   RAILWAY   MAIL   CLERKS



## CHAPTER 36

### JOB SECURITY

Whenever representatives of a local branch of the Railway Mail Clerks Federation appeared before our Commission, they mentioned their fears and apprehensions about the departmental policy of gradually abolishing the railway mail service.<sup>1/</sup>

They say that the Department tacitly assured them of permanent employment when entering the Civil Service. As many have devoted the best years of their lives to the postal service, it is easily understood why they are disturbed by the insecurity of their position. They seek at least assurance, if not a formal guarantee, that, as other railway mail services are eliminated, the Department will grant them the right to transfer to other positions within the district, without loss of seniority or salary. Finally, they do not want compulsory retirement because they are not responsible for the consequences of decisions taken by the Department since they have entered the Service.

Until now, the Department has treated with fairness those railway mail clerks whose positions have been abolished. They have been assigned other responsibilities in post offices, they retained their classification and salary rate, and kept their seniority rights. The only condition set by the Department is that they must apply for any vacancy occurring in the railway mail service within their district at their grade or one grade higher. If they do not apply, they are downgraded but

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<sup>1/</sup> The number of positions has decreased from 1,400 in 1957 to 347 in 1966.

retained in the postal service.

However, despite all its sympathy for the railway mail clerks, the Department does not see how it can possibly guarantee them permanent employment. It considers it has to keep pace with the rapid progress of modern technology and if necessary abolish positions in favour of a more efficient and economical operation of the postal service.

There are two other aspects to this problem.

The first one, of concern to the Civil Service Commission, results from the pay conversion rules of the program being carried out by the Bureau of Classification Revision. Surplus railway mail clerks who are assigned to post offices and who are not performing the duties of their previous classification are considered as "over-classified employees" and are automatically placed in a "holding" class. They will not benefit from any future cyclical salary revision until such time as the maximum rate of their positions either reaches or exceeds the existing rate.

The second one refers to a disagreement on seniority rights which arose recently between the Union of Postal Workers and the Federation. This matter has been fully discussed elsewhere in the Report.<sup>1/</sup>

WE RECOMMEND:

265. That the Department adhere to its policy regarding surplus railway mail clerks and thus provide them with maximum reasonable security in any new position they might assume.

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<sup>1/</sup> See Chapter 12, "Seniority".

## CHAPTER 37

### HOURS OF WORK AND OVERTIME

#### 1. Hours of work

Railway mail clerks work on the basis of a 40-hour week and the Department calculates their annual salary accordingly.

Due to some peculiarities of the railway mail service, railway mail clerks in the normal carrying out of their duties are not employed on a regular basis. They may work from 50 to 60 hours one week and 20 to 30 hours the next. The Department, in accordance with the Civil Service Regulations <sup>1/</sup> and the Canadian Labour (Standards) Code <sup>2/</sup> introduced for this class a theoretical "averaging out" system based on the whole year (yearly potential). Each year at the beginning of April, it determines the number of hours of work required of the railway mail clerks until the end of March of the following year. In any given year, for instance, this calculation will tell the railway mail clerks, beforehand, that the potential number of working hours should amount to a total of 1,888 hours or 236 days of work for the year.

Departmental statistics, on the other hand, show that a railway mail clerk is normally on duty 49 weeks in a year and that, on the basis of the yearly potential of 1,888 hours, his weekly average is 38 hours and 32 minutes. Hence, on the basis of the recognized system, we have "under hours" which do not mean, however, a reduction in salary. In other words, whether

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1/ Section 10.

2/ Section 5.

the total hours of work as calculated by the Department reach 40 hours per week or not, the railway mail clerk receives full salary.

We asked the Department if it had ever considered adopting a different system for the calculation and scheduling of working hours for railway mail clerks. The Department stated that it had already contemplated the scheduling of work and setting of pay scales on the basis of mileage. It shelved the project and did not discuss it officially with the Federation because the operation of the railway mail service in the future appeared too doubtful and because the Bureau of Classification Revision of the Civil Service Commission has, in the meantime, begun the study to which we referred previously.<sup>1/</sup> The Department added that any reduction in weekly hours of work would mean a proportional reduction in salary levels. We do not believe this to be necessarily so.

This brief outline emphasizes the complexity of the problem of hours of work for railway mail clerks.<sup>2/</sup> A complete solution must be found, i.e., a solution which will take into account all related factors. It is best to leave it to the parties concerned who, during the forthcoming negotiations, will be free to scrutinize every aspect of the problem and analyse its implications on the whole. This decision appears much more sensible since neither the national leaders of the Federation nor the railway mail clerks submitted their recommendations in a comprehensive and orderly manner. If we intervene formally on a particular point of some importance, but without having regard to the problem as a whole, we might worsen or confuse the situation.

There is, however, an anomaly of secondary importance which can be corrected immediately and without trouble.

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1/ See Chapter 9, "Classification of Positions".

2/ In this chapter and the next, we refer to other problems which also affect hours of work, at least indirectly.

At the present time, the Department does not pay railway mail clerks a night differential for time spent on trains because of late arrival. Night differential is paid only on the basis of the official time-table. If the train is due in at midnight but for one reason or other arrives at 3 a.m., the clerks, even though they remain on duty, are not granted night differential for those last three hours. We see no valid justification for such a policy.

WE RECOMMEND:

266. That the Department henceforth pay night differential to railway mail clerks for all hours of work during which they have remained on duty in the railway mail car.

2. Overtime

Uneven scheduling of working hours for railway mail clerks over the year also creates overtime problems.

(1) Excluding December, railway mail clerks receive practically no cash payment for overtime for the simple reason that the Department does this only once a year and only if time-off compensation granted during the eleven months has not been sufficient to balance the required number of normal hours of work foreseen.

The Department objects to the expression "time-off compensation". As far as it is concerned it allows railway mail clerks, if necessary, either "lieu-days" or "lay-off days" to bring the number of hours worked within the limits of their annual potential. Thus, when the Department sees that in a given district some clerks have worked, or may have to work a greater number of hours than others, it calls on duty the clerks with the lesser number of hours, often relief clerks, and grants what it calls "lieu-days" or "lay-off days" to the others.<sup>1/</sup>

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1/ The difference in meaning between "lieu-days", "lay-off days" and "days off" seems rather subtle.

Railway mail clerks find fault with this practice. They suggest that overtime, earned during the summer months when they double up to enable as many clerks as possible to go on vacation, be paid for in cash at the end of September.<sup>1/</sup>

The Department believes this proposal is neither fair nor practical. It points out that the fixed establishment of railway mail clerks in a postal district is never exceeded. It is its responsibility, as a careful and conscientious administrator, to see that even the relief staff reaches its own annual potential and, while meeting the requirements of the railway mail service, to minimize overtime expenditure as much as possible.

(2) With regard to December overtime, which is paid for in cash at the end of the month, the Department points out that this policy came into being at a time when the mail volume handled by railway mail clerks during the month was much greater than it is now and clerks had to make a greater number of trips than was normally the case.<sup>2/</sup> Later, following protests from the Federation, the Department ruled that an exception could be made to the above-mentioned overtime compensation system and for that month the extra hours worked by the railway mail clerks would be paid in cash.

The Department has no intention of going back on its decision but it claims that the situation during the summer months cannot be compared with either that of December a few years back or with that of more recent December months.

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1/ Normally, the Department compensates for these additional hours of work by granting "lay-off days" or "lieu-days" liquidated in January, February or March.

2/ The necessity of hiring during December additional clerks with little experience also required the Department to take precautionary measures to maintain railway mail service at its normal level and, consequently, to call for more hours of work on the part of full-time clerks.

This is a serious matter and, as we said before, we believe that the Department and the Federation should try to settle the matter during the forthcoming collective bargaining negotiations. The possibility of breaking the year into three or four distinct cycles and providing for payment in cash of overtime in every cycle is worthy of detailed examination before being discarded.

(3) There is an anomaly, however, which the Department should hasten to rectify. Unlike most employees in the Public Service, railway mail clerks do not receive cash compensation at time-and-a-half when they work on a statutory holiday.

WE RECOMMEND:

267. That the Department pay railway mail clerks compensation at time-and-a-half for all work performed on a statutory holiday.

## CHAPTER 38

### MILEAGE ALLOWANCE AND LAYOVER TIME

In our opinion these two problems are related, but we will first consider them separately.

#### 1. Mileage allowance

A few years ago, the Department approved a mileage allowance of one cent per mile to compensate railway mail clerks for the cost of accommodation and meals when they have to remain away from their normal place of residence.<sup>1/</sup> In 1951, this allowance was increased to one and one half cents per mile.

Railway mail clerks claim that this rate is clearly inadequate. They refer to the increase in the cost of living over the last 15 years years and suggest an increase to 2,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  and even 3 cents per mile.

The Department has already discussed this problem with the Federation. It has not until now agreed with their suggestions because it is convinced that the mileage allowance as such is no longer adequate for the majority of railway mail clerks. The Department believes a different system is required such as:

- a) payment of actual expenses incurred within reasonable limits;
- b) payment of a per diem allowance on the basis of local rates; or
- c) payment of a number of hours per day in each case of layover at away-from-home terminals.

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<sup>1/</sup> Railway mail clerks claim that this compensation has also been granted as an incentive to take on the job. The Department rejects this claim.

## 2. Layover time

Railway mail clerks claim also that time credited by the Department as normal working hours while at away-from-home terminals is insufficient.

At present, the hours spent in away-terminals are deducted from the total hours in a round trip, and railway mail clerks receive one-third of the difference.<sup>1/</sup>

The Department states that this formula was developed as a result of representations made by the Federation. The following are the reasons<sup>2/</sup> and basic explanations by the Department:

a) It is part of the normal working conditions of a railway mail clerk to have to spend off-duty or rest time (known as "layover") at an away-from-home terminal while waiting to make the return trip.

b) This layover time can be accumulated to the point where the railway mail clerk is adversely affected because it becomes almost impossible for him to reach his yearly potential hours of work. This is particularly so in the case of the clerk working on short runs with long layovers: although away from home and off-duty during these hours he cannot undertake any other run.

c) This is why, in order to compensate for excessive layover,<sup>3/</sup> it is advisable to grant the railway mail clerk time credit based on the ratio of "work to rest" over a 24-hour period, or eight hours of work

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1/ For instance, if a clerk spends 23 hours away from home during a 20-hour round trip, he receives credit for one hour.

2/ Many railway mail clerks are unaware of the basic reason for this formula established by the Department.

3/ When layover is equal or inferior to round trip time, the Department regards it as normal and equivalent to a period of reasonable and necessary rest. In such instances it does not pay any compensation.

out of 24, or one-third of the total. Such is the basis for the above calculation.

Let us consider some practical results of the application of both formulas.<sup>1/</sup>

The railway mail clerk on the Ottawa-Toronto train has a total layover of 37 hours and 30 minutes in Toronto on week-ends for which he receives only \$7.35. The clerk on the Montreal-Toronto run receives \$10.05 for a layover of 37 hours and 45 minutes on week-ends but he receives also \$10.05 for a layover of 12 hours and 30 minutes on week days. The clerk on the La Malbaie-Quebec train is entitled to \$2.64 for a layover of 22 hours and 35 minutes on week-ends. On the other hand, the clerk on the Quebec-Senneterre train receives \$11.76 for a layover of 8 hours and 5 minutes while the clerk on the Montreal-North Bay run gets \$10.32 for 7 hours and 35 minutes.

These figures indicate how important it has become to revise both formulas or to replace them by another one altogether. Neither one nor the other, considered as a whole or separately, meets today's needs. The mileage allowance proves inadequate in several cases if we consider it exclusively as an allowance for room and board expenses. The method of calculating layover allowance seems rather arbitrary and lacks a sound basis. Nevertheless, considering the last two examples given by the Department, the two formulas put together may occasionally look like extra pay, at least in part.

A complete review of the situation offers several alternatives. Among the most impressive are the possibility of including the mileage allowance in the basic salary, to cancel the layover allowance, and to pay

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1/ The Department provided the Commission with statistics quoted in the next paragraph.

a travel allowance based either on the cost of living in each district or locality, or simply on the payment of actual expenses for room and board.

WE RECOMMEND:

268. That the Department and the Federation of Railway Mail Clerks meet, as soon as possible, to come to a mutual agreement on the most appropriate method of combining mileage and layover allowances.

## CHAPTER 39

### DEAD-HEADING

Railway mail clerks suggested that when they leave their place of residence to work on runs originating away from home (dead-heading) they be given a travel allowance for travelling to and from their headquarters, regardless of the nature and duration of the outside assignment. They also suggested that such "away from home" assignments be of short duration.

The Department states that it does count "dead-heading" time as working hours except when a clerk lives in a locality other than the terminal point from which he normally starts his run. Nevertheless, when a clerk travels in a railway mail car, from his place of residence to the terminal where he is to start his run and vice versa, he is paid a mileage allowance. If he travels in another section of the train, on the authority of his district director, he is given a pass and submits an expense account. The Department believes its policy is fair and reasonable. Regarding the suggestion made by the railway mail clerks on the duration of assignments at away-terminals, it points out that this is part of the normal duties of a relief clerk, that he has to acknowledge and accept these duties beforehand, and that the Department as an employer cannot change this policy.

It seems that the Department very seldom calls for extended periods of travel time from full-time railway mail clerks. Usually, they make only one full round trip followed by an immediate return to the home terminal. If this is really the case, we agree.

Railway mail clerks in the United States have assignments similar in most details to those of their Canadian counterparts. We are told that these assignments also vary as to duration. Nevertheless, they are not paid any additional allowances or credits for being away from home. However, they are given a pass allowing them to return home on any train without charge, but without any consideration whatever being given to travel time.

WE RECOMMEND:

269. That the Department make sure railway mail clerks are provided at all times with the necessary means of transportation when they must travel from their place of residence to the starting point of the assigned run and back.
270. That expenses incurred by railway mail clerks in such cases be reimbursed.
271. That the Department, in consultation with the Federation of Railway Mail Clerks, revise its regulations concerning time compensation for clerks travelling under such circumstances.



P A R T   V I I

S O M E   S P E C I A L   P R O B L E M S



## CHAPTER 40

### PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Department's public relations and information program accounts for approximately 0.2% of the Post Office Department's total budget. This is a very small percentage. As for the program itself, it has not always been as broad as it should have been. The Department admits this.

It was not until last year that it began the work of re-organization and expansion essential to the implementation of an entirely new public relations program. It is waiting for the Bureau of Classification Revision to complete its study of the Public Information Officer group.

The new program appears to be well planned. Its main aims are to improve the Department's public image, to better inform "mailers" and seek their co-operation. It is also directed to employees who, in their daily contacts with the public, can leave a good or bad impression of the postal service. We hope that the Department will receive the assistance it needs to carry out its program.

Some employees claim that the prestige of the Department is deteriorating in some areas. We are under the impression that it enjoys an excellent reputation in the country at large and that Canadians recognize the good quality of our postal service. We are convinced that a great majority of the employees themselves are more than willing to co-operate actively in all projects which are likely to improve the Department's image, if in fact, it is deteriorating.

#### WE RECOMMEND:

272. That the Department and appropriate agencies hasten the decisions required to implement the new public relations and information program of the Post Office Department.

## CHAPTER 41

### METHODS AND STANDARDS

Approximately 12 years ago the Department established a Methods and Standards Division which adopted a system of analysing the work flow in the field operating services of the Post Office Department and sought better methods of processing the mail.

The Department not only has the right but also an obligation to find ways of improving its methods of operation.

The Department, moreover, is satisfied with the results of this undertaking. Among other things, it has made it possible to realize considerable savings.<sup>1/</sup> For the information of the employees, it emphasizes that they themselves have profited by it. For example, the Department gives credit to the Methods and Standards Division and its program for the reduction of week-end shifts and for making possible the granting of annual vacation leave in the summer to a greater number of employees.

And yet, no Division in the Department was the object of more criticism.

The staff organizations have been critical of the arbitrary way in which the system was adopted in the first place: no consultation, no discussion, no exchange of views, no explanation, they claim, ever preceded its implementation.

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1/ According to information supplied by the Department, the total expenses incurred by the Methods and Standards Division in 1963-64 reached \$656,000, while the gross savings across the country amounted to \$5,400,000. The Department states that, in ten years, the net savings have reached \$20,666,000.

The employees are skeptical. They suspect the new techniques of being tools in the hands of management aimed at increasing production at any cost and decreasing personnel establishments. They charge that these are hindering them in their work and reducing their normal efficiency. They criticize the Division's officials for their superior attitude or for their lack of consideration for the workers.

(1) In the Department's opinion difficulties arose in the first place because the aims of the program had not been explained in enough detail to the workers but, the Department claims that when it became aware of this omission, it made every effort to explain and to clarify the methods and the aims of the Methods and Standards Division.

We do not feel it has succeeded to any significant degree. A great deal more remains to be done to create a favourable atmosphere and a climate of understanding and confidence. To achieve this:

- a) A more comprehensive dialogue must be held. The Department has indicated that it would readily agree to discuss details of the methods and standards adopted to date with the representatives of the staff organizations and would also agree to allow them to participate as observers in future projects.
- b) It is important that the personnel of the Methods and Standards Division who are now given a one-month training course in the basic techniques of time-and-motion study and then six more months on-the-job training, be better informed and better trained in the art of human relations. Their task would become more popularly accepted and most likely they would be more successful in gaining acceptance of their proposed changes if they sought the co-operation of the workers and encouraged suggestions and an exchange of views.
- c) Their success would be even greater if they took more precautions in order to minimize the impression that the sole purpose of Methods and Standards is

to place constant pressure on employees to increase their output. The purpose is to obtain from the work force 85% of what is considered a reasonable rate of production. It was alleged that the results are posted only when this percentage is not met. We believe the results should also be posted when the 85% mark is exceeded. We are convinced that the employees would react far more favourably to the demands of the Methods and Standards Division if, when the occasion arises, they were made to feel fully appreciated for their greater efforts and for the progress they make.

d) This Division could play a still more active and profitable role by finding ways and means to improve certain working conditions directly related to its objectives. We are thinking of measures taken in laying out work areas, to ensure better lighting or ventilation, and also of the adoption of more comfortable stools, improved sorting cases, standing boards for sorters, etc.

There are many things which affect the employees directly in their daily work. If the Methods and Standards Division can prove itself in small matters, it will probably be more successful in "selling" the more important procedures.

(2) An appreciable number of employees suggested that the Methods and Standards Division be abolished and replaced by supervision of a better quality. The Department believes that the need for changes and improvements in work methods will always exist and that the system these employees are complaining about is the best and most economical one to its knowledge.

Methods and standards are a "necessary evil". Employees do not understand the necessity for it as is so often the case in industry. This is the reason why the Department must make a sustained effort to familiarize employees with the aims and function of this Division.

WE RECOMMEND:

273. That, henceforth, before making any significant changes in methods and standards, the Department first discuss them with the staff organizations.
274. That all postal employees obtain detailed explanation of the objectives of the present Methods and Standards program and of the results achieved to date.
275. That the personnel of the Methods and Standards Division receive adequate training in the art of "human relations".
276. That the Methods and Standards Division pay more attention to the improvement of equipment and working conditions and to any other factor which may affect the workers in the carrying out of their daily tasks.

## CHAPTER 42

### PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

We have already mentioned specifically and at times implicitly the need for a better personnel administration in the Department.

Some will say that this matter does not fall within the authority of an inquiry on working conditions and that we are overstepping our terms of reference.

We do not agree. We feel, on the contrary, that this vast area of responsibility must be analysed and discussed in our Report. It is closely related with the general welfare of the employees and the maintenance of high morale which affect their efficiency and productivity. It is, as a matter of fact, one of our main concerns.

(1) With the forthcoming collective bargaining and with the discussions which they will provoke and the grievance procedures they will bring into being, the working conditions of postal employees are bound to improve tremendously. As a complement to this giant stride in the right direction, we believe it is essential that the Department establish and maintain a sound program of personnel policies, practices and procedures, and create an organization capable of implementing this program in the field operating services.

To date, personnel administration has too often offered in field offices only personnel "services". It has played a rather passive role. Its representatives and officers in some grade 19, 18 and 17 post offices and in some districts have taken little initiative. They have waited for employees to come to them looking for

advice. They have undertaken, as we have already stated, incidental or secondary tasks to the detriment of their main functions.<sup>1/</sup>

We have an entirely different concept of personnel administration.

We do not see this service as an usurper of the rights, powers or prerogatives of line managers, but we do see it as a service intended to assist, advise, counsel and co-operate with them in the carrying out of their responsibilities. This service must not be relegated to the background. It rests with "Personnel" to look for and suggest improvements, attempt to persuade managers of the value of new policies and, should the occasion arise, help implement them. At times, Personnel Administration will have to assert itself, as it were, and prove it is capable of resolving some of the difficult problems encountered.

We do not deny the importance of providing personnel "services", but, in our opinion, this is a secondary function for Personnel Administration and its administrators or officers. Its primary function is to identify obstacles and problems, examine them, study their functional, social or economic implications, and recommend logical and practical solutions. This service is justified and should be recognized as a separate entity. It must explore new horizons in this age of change and rapid evolution in which we live, and keep pressing for progress. The very size of the Post Office Department, its ever-growing operational requirements and its obligation to serve the public directly and promptly from day to day, demands a modern, dynamic and ever alert Personnel Administration.

It is time that all district directors, postmasters and department heads, officers and supervisors in the field, at the district and local level, understand the practical value of a sound personnel policy in a department such as the Post Office, which is more operational than administrative. To a large extent, it is

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<sup>1/</sup> Chapter 4, "General Impressions".

the more or less opposing attitude of some of these people which has prevented the implementation of advice received from the few personnel experts working at Headquarters.

We have noted that the Government now recognizes the importance of this problem: the Treasury Board has created a separate branch to provide policy guide lines, direction, and co-ordination of the personnel administration function throughout the Public Service; the Civil Service Commission is making every effort to improve the staffing of the Public Service and it has also employed outside consultants to study all aspects of this field in some departments.

WE RECOMMEND:

277. That the senior officer responsible for personnel administration in the Department be given the rank of Assistant Deputy Minister and report directly to the Deputy Postmaster General.
278. That Personnel Administration be reorganized and that a sufficient number of qualified persons be employed as soon as possible.
279. That this personnel service be provided with all necessary research facilities.

These are the first and most important steps to take.

We see this Assistant Deputy Minister as the equivalent of a vice-president in charge of personnel in a business corporation. In view of the extent the geographical area served by the Post Office and the significance of labour costs in the Department, he should have all necessary latitude to recommend the adoption of personnel policies which clearly take cognizance of the many and complex needs of the daily operation of the postal service and the general welfare of the employees.

(2) We examined, with great interest, a model of a departmental personnel administration organization, proposed by J.J. Carson, Chairman of the Civil

Service Commission,<sup>1/</sup> grouping the functions into four main subdivisions:

- a) manpower planning and development;
- b) compensation and benefits;
- c) staff relations;
- d) personnel services.

In May 1966, at the request of the Deputy Postmaster General, the Civil Service Commission prepared and published "A Plan of Organization for Personnel Administration in the Post Office Department". This plan offers a basic structure "suitable for the requirements of the Department based on present requirements and anticipated developments in the field of personnel administration in the Canadian Civil Service generally". This plan follows the general outline of the Carson model and appears fully acceptable to us. We believe that both the Civil Service Commission and the Department are to be commended for their initiative and for adopting measures which were obviously necessary and are sure to enhance the lot of postal employees.

In the appendices of our Report the main position guides covering the most important functions,<sup>2/</sup> together with charts showing the present and proposed organization for personnel administration,<sup>3/</sup> and the geographic distribution of employees<sup>4/</sup> in the Post Office Department.

Here is a brief outline of the proposed organization:

- a) Staffing
  - (i) Manpower planning
  - (ii) Manpower appraisal and inventory

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1/ Paper prepared for the Public Personnel Institute, 15 June 1965.

2/ Appendices H to N.

3/ Appendices O and P.

4/ Appendix Q.

- (iii) Training and development
- (iv) Employment
- b) Personnel Classification
- c) Program Co-ordination and Employee Service
  - (i) Communications officer
  - (ii) Employee services
  - (iii) Headquarters personnel administration
- d) Staff Relations
  - (i) Co-ordination of grievances and adjudications
  - (ii) Compensation and conditions
  - (iii) Planning and research
- e) Field Offices
  - (i) Personnel administrators in major post offices, 1/  
(Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Ottawa)
  - (ii) District personnel administrators (14).

These headings except perhaps that of the program co-ordinator appear self-explanatory.

In an organization which serves hundreds of localities, through staff and semi-staff post offices spread right across the country, with anywhere from three or four employees to several thousands each, there are bound to be difficulties of communication. Inevitably, a great many directives and instructions are required to guide such personnel. So, for at least some time to come, we believe that the Department should not pursue further its policy of decentralization of responsibilities and authority from the divisions and services at Headquarters. They would do well to mark time for a while until policies, programs and procedures have been developed and co-ordinated.

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1/ We believe that a personnel officer should also be provided for grades 16, 15, and 14 post offices, as recommended by the Civil Service Commission.

The Assistant Deputy Minister (Personnel Administration) will have to devote considerable time and effort to this job. The advent of collective bargaining and the first discussions around the bargaining table will demand his personal attention. He will have to keep in constant contact with the field people to become aware and keep abreast of all the problems arising as a result of the acceptance of new policies and their interpretation. He will also have the responsibility to ensure they are accepted. He certainly cannot be tied down to his desk.

We considered recommending that he be given an assistant but decided against it and support the opinion of the Civil Service Commission that this arrangement "... combines the twin disadvantages of blocking direct access to the senior administrator by his principal subordinates, and additionally, relegates the Directors within the branch to a third level reporting relationship with the attendant implications of this arrangement for the classification levels of their positions".<sup>1/</sup>

However, it is absolutely essential that a specialist be recognized as the chief of the Programme Co-ordination Division. Not only will he have to recruit or assign more than 70 competent personnel administrators or officers for the field operating services but he will also be responsible for guiding and advising them. These administrators will be "on the front line" daily, at the district or local level, facing the difficulties and problems as they arise. As the Civil Service Commission stated in its survey "...even the most enlightened policies and most wisely conceived programmes originating from headquarters will fall short of required standards of application unless field managers have prompt and effective access to advice and service, responsive on a day-to-day basis, to their requirements".<sup>2/</sup>

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1/ A Plan of Organization for Personnel Administration in the P.O. Dept., p. 73.

2/ Ibid., p. 72.

If the Department has such an organization for personnel administration, it will improve its employee relations appreciably, providing that postmasters and supervisors who are in daily contact with the employees are themselves equal to the task, and collaborate without any reservation towards the application of the newly proposed concepts.

WE RECOMMEND:

280. That the plan of organization proposed for personnel administration in the Post Office Department be implemented as soon as possible.
281. That grade 16, 15 and 14 post offices be provided with a personnel officer.
282. That the appropriate authorities allocate the funds required by the Department for this purpose.

CLOSING REMARKS



#### CLOSING REMARKS

Our mission is accomplished!

We feel confident that we have carried out this task to the best of our ability and with all the dispatch humanly possible. We have tried to be positive and practical. We made every effort to be constructive rather than destructive.

We hope that the Department, the staff organizations, the postal employees and all other interested agencies will welcome our Report as a whole and will implement our recommendations.

Whatever happens, we believe that all of our recommendations deserve serious and honest consideration. Some will consider perhaps that we have carried things too far, others, not far enough. Some will be surprised at the great number of recommendations which are favourable to the employees. One must not lose sight of the fact that our Commission had to express an opinion on grievances submitted by these employees and not on all departmental policies. Nevertheless, anyone who reads our Report carefully will note that we did not agree with many of the suggestions made by employees. In such instances, however, we did not think it was necessary to make any recommendations.

What matters, first of all, is to have every one of our recommendations studied and, either within or outside the context of the forthcoming collective bargaining negotiations, find solutions or ways and means by which postal employees will be given fair and reasonable working conditions, while at the same time keeping our country's postal service at its present high level of efficiency.

We are confident that the Department and the staff organizations will be able to attain this goal if the good will and sincerity, which we witnessed throughout our Inquiry, continues to prevail at all times.

A P P E N D I C E S



APPENDIX A

LIST OF PLACES AND DATES OF THE HEARINGS OF THE COMMISSION  
AND OF BRIEFS SUBMITTED\*

<u>CITY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>EXHIBITS</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>
OTTAWA	Sept. 20, 1965	1	Order in Council
OTTAWA	Sept. 20, 1965	2 to 8	National Exec. LCUC
OTTAWA	Sept. 22, 1965		LCUC - Ottawa
TORONTO	Sept. 27 - 28, 1965	9 to 17	RMCFCC - Toronto CUPW - Toronto LCUC - Toronto LCUC - Rexdale LCUC - Oshawa LCUC - North Bay
HAMILTON	Sept. 29 - 30, 1965	18 to 19C	CUPW - Hamilton CUPW - Toronto LCUC - Hamilton
MONTREAL	Oct. 4 - 6, 1965	20 to 49	LCUC - Montreal CUPW - Montreal RMCFCC - Montreal
OTTAWA	Oct. 13, 1965		LCUC - Ottawa

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\* LCUC - Letter Carriers' Union of Canada  
RMCFCC - Railway Mail Clerks' Federation of Canada  
CUPW - Canadian Union of Postal Workers  
CSAC - Civil Service Association of Canada  
CPA - Canadian Postmasters' Association  
CUPE - Canadian Union of Public Employees  
DPW - Department of Public Works  
CSFC - Civil Service Federation of Canada

<u>CITY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>EXHIBITS</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>
VICTORIA	Oct. 18 - 19, 1965	50 to 57	LCUC - Kamloops LCUC - Prince George LCUC - Pt. Alberni LCUC - White Rock LCUC - Victoria CUPW - Victoria Management
VANCOUVER	Oct. 20 - 22, 1965	58 to 64A	CUPW - Vancouver LCUC - Vancouver LCUC - New Westminster LCUC - Haney CSAC - Vancouver CUPW - New Westminster RMCF C - Vancouver Management
CALGARY	Oct. 25 - 26, 1965	65 to 69	CUPW - Calgary CUPW - Lethbridge LCUC - Calgary LCUC - Lethbridge Management
EDMONTON	Oct. 28 - 29, 1965	70 to 74	CUPW - Edmonton CUPW - Red Deer CUPW - Medicine Hat LCUC - Edmonton LCUC - Medicine Hat LCUC - Red Deer LCUC - St. Albert RMCF C - Edmonton Management
OTTAWA	Nov. 4, 1965	75	National Exec. CSAC
ST. JOHN'S	Nov. 15 - 16, 1965	76 to 78A	CUPW - St. John's LCUC - St. John's LCUC - Corner Brook RMCF C - Newfoundland

<u>CITY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>EXHIBITS</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>
HALIFAX	Nov. 17 - 19, 1965	79 to 92	CUPW - Halifax CUPW - Dartmouth CUPW - Sydney CUPW - Truro CUPW - New Glasgow CUPW - North Sydney LCUC - Halifax LCUC - Sydney LCUC - Dartmouth LCUC - Kentville LCUC - Truro LCUC - Glace Bay RMCFC - Halifax Management
MONCTON	Nov. 22 - 24, 1965	93 to 110	CUPW - Moncton CUPW - Saint John CUPW - Campbellton CUPW - Charlottetown CUPW - Summerside CUPW - Dalhousie CUPW - Fredericton CUPW - Newcastle LCUC - Moncton LCUC - Saint John LCUC - Fredericton LCUC - Edmundston LCUC - Charlottetown RMCFC - Charlottetown RMCFC - Saint John Management
SASKATOON	Dec. 6 - 7, 1965	111 to 117	CUPW - Saskatchewan West LCUC - Prince Albert CUPW - Prince Albert CUPW - Saskatoon CUPW - Swift Current CUPW - Moose Jaw RMCFC - Saskatoon LCUC - Saskatoon CSAC - North Battleford CSAC - Lloydminster CUPW - Lloydminster Management

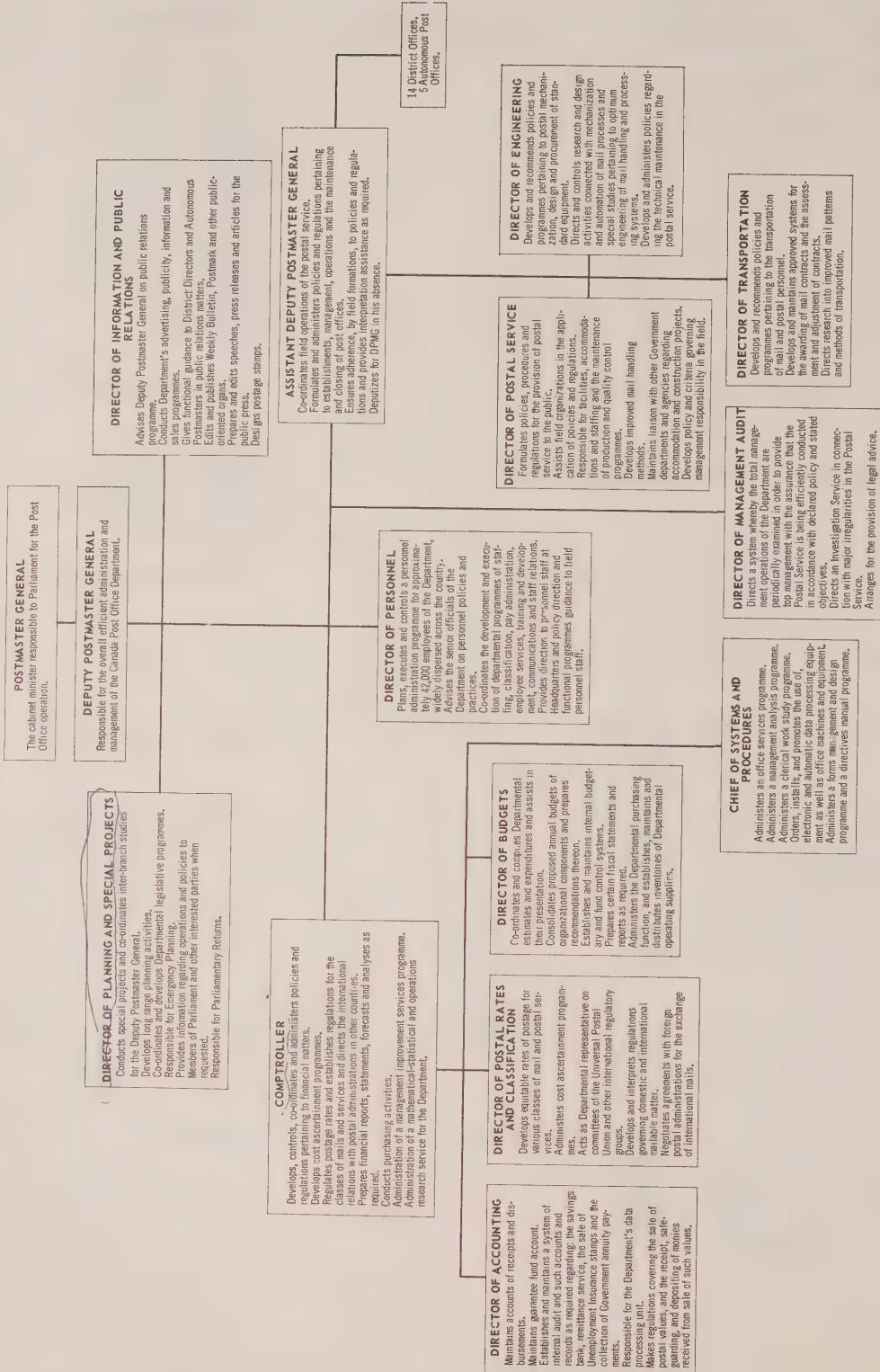
<u>CITY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>EXHIBITS</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>
REGINA	Dec. 8 - 9, 1965	118 to 126	CUPW - Regina LCUC - Regina RMCFC - Moose Jaw LCUC - Tisdale CUPW - Estevan CUPW - Melville CSAC - Saskatchewan Region CPA - National Pres. Management
OTTAWA	Dec. 15, 1965	127 to 127H	DPW - Ottawa
MONREAL	Jan. 10 - 14, 1966	128 to 149	CUPW - Montreal CUPW - St. Jean CUPW - Joliette CUPW - Sherbrooke CUPW - Drummondville CUPW - Lac Mégantic CUPW - St. Hyacinthe CUPW - St. Jérôme CUPW - St. Jean d'Iberville CUPW - Granby CUPW - Mont-Laurier LCUC - Montreal LCUC - St. Jean LCUC - Hull LCUC - Gatineau LCUC - Ste Anne de Bellevue LCUC - Joliette LCUC - Sherbrooke LCUC - Drummondville RMCFC - Montreal
QUEBEC CITY	Jan. 17 - 19, 1966	150 to 171	CUPW - Quebec City CUPW - Rimouski CUPW - Jonquière CUPW - Chicoutimi CUPW - Grand-Mère CUPW - Shawinigan CUPW - Trois-Rivières CUPW - Lévis LCUC - Quebec City LCUC - Val d'Or LCUC - Alina LCUC - Joncouière - Kénogami

<u>CITY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>EXHIBITS</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>
QUEBEC CITY (Cont'd)			
			LCUC - Trois-Rivières - Grand-Mère LCUC - Chicoutimi LCUC - Lévis LCUC - Station Terminal - Quebec City LCUC - Station "Haute Ville" Quebec City LCUC - Ste-Foy RMCFC - Quebec City Management
OTTAWA	Feb. 8, 1966	172 & 173	CUPE - Montreal CUPE - Quebec City LCUC - Ottawa
WINNIPEG	Feb. 14 - 16, 1966	174 to 186B	CUPW - Dauphin CUPW - Winnipeg RMCFC - Winnipeg CUPW - Portage la Prairie CUPW - Brandon LCUC - Brandon LCUC - Dauphin LCUC - Transcona LCUC - Winnipeg LCUC - Fort Frances Management
FORT WILLIAM	Feb. 17 - 18, 1966	187 to 193	CUPW - Fort William CUPW - Port Arthur CUPW - Sudbury CUPW - Sault Ste Marie LCUC - Fort William LCUC - Port Arthur LCUC - Timmins LCUC - Sudbury LCUC - Sault Ste Marie Management
OTTAWA	Feb. 22 - 23, 1966	194 to 197	CUPW - Ottawa RMCFC - Ottawa LCUC - Trenton LCUC - Ottawa LCUC - Kingston LCUC - Peterborough LCUC - Brockville LCUC - Belleville LCUC - Lindsay

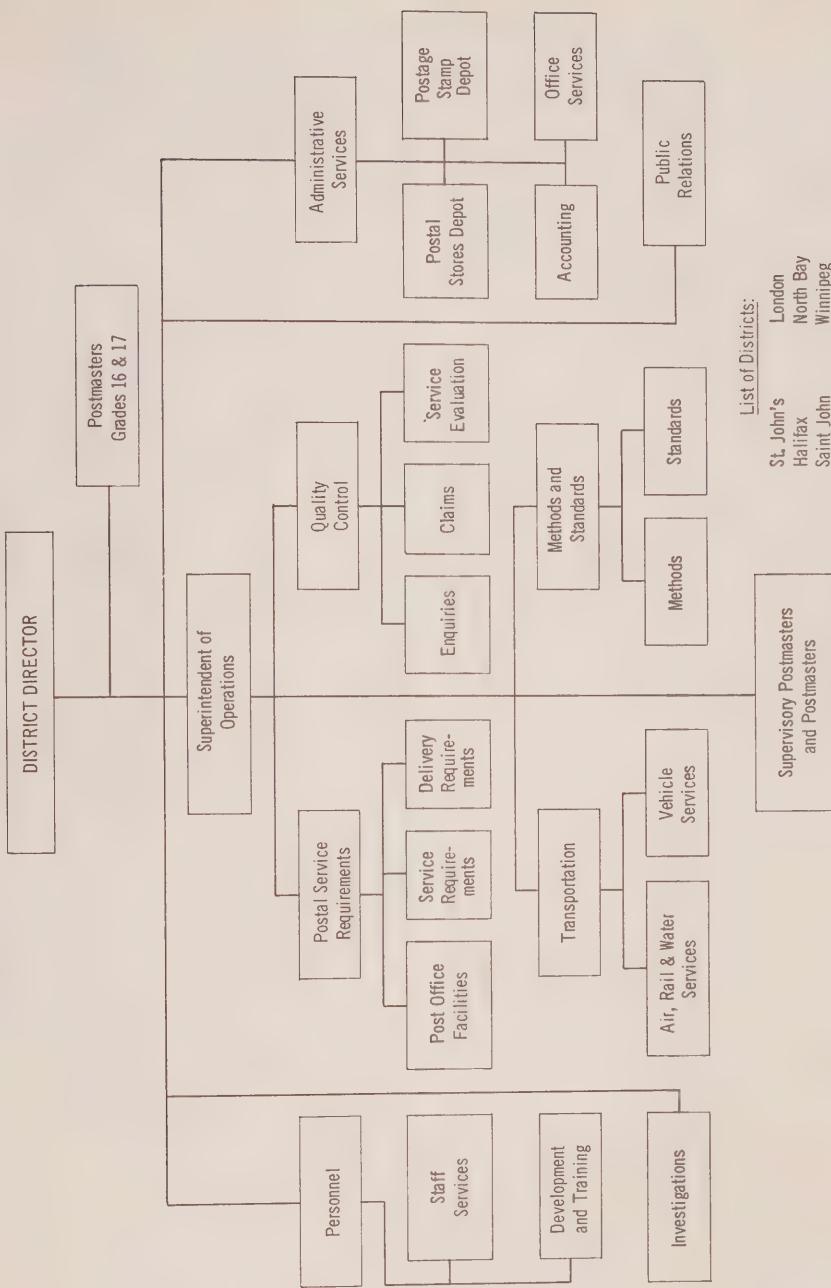
<u>CITY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>EXHIBITS</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>
OTTAWA (Cont'd)			LCUC - Pembroke LCUC - Orillia LCUC - Cornwall LCUC - Barrie LCUC - Aurora LCUC - Hawkesbury LCUC - Cobourg LCUC - Trenton LCUC - Smith Falls LCUC - Port Hope LCUC - Midland LCUC - Collingwood LCUC - Renfrew LCUC - Newmarket Management
OTTAWA	March 1, 1966		Management - North Bay
TORONTO	March 7 - 10, 1966	198 to 210	CUPW - Toronto CUPW - Scarborough CUPW - Hamilton CUPW - Peterborough CUPW - Agincourt CUPW - Don Mills CUPW - Downsview CUPW - Etobicoke CUPW - Islington CUPW - Rexdale CUPW - West Hill CUPW - Willowdale LCUC - Hamilton LCUC - Port Credit LCUC - St. Catharines LCUC - Guelph RMCFC - Toronto RMCFC - North Bay RMCFC - Fort William
WINDSOR	March 14 - 15, 1966	211 & 212	CUPW - Windsor LCUC - Windsor Management
LONDON	March 16 - 18, 1966	213 to 222	CUPW - London CUPW - St. Thomas CUPW - Guelph CUPW - Galt CUPW - Kitchener

<u>CITY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>EXHIBITS</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>
LONDON (Cont'd)			CUPW - Preston CUPW - Waterloo CUPW - Stratford CUPW - Sarnia LCUC - London LCUC - Sarnia LCUC - Brantford LCUC - Kitchener LCUC - Waterloo LCUC - St. Thomas RMCFC - London Management
OTTAWA	March 28 - 29, 1966		P.O. Headquarters
OTTAWA	April 12 - 14, 1966	223 to 225	CUPW - Nat. Exec. LCUC - Nat. Exec. RMCFC - Nat. Exec.
OTTAWA	April 19 - 20, 1966		P.O. Headquarters
OTTAWA	May 9 - 10, 1966		P.O. Headquarters
OTTAWA	May 19, 1966	226	P.O. Headquarters CSFC - Nat. Exec.
OTTAWA	June 16, 1966	227	P.O. Headquarters

# NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS – FUNCTIONAL CHART



## DISTRICT ORGANIZATION CHART

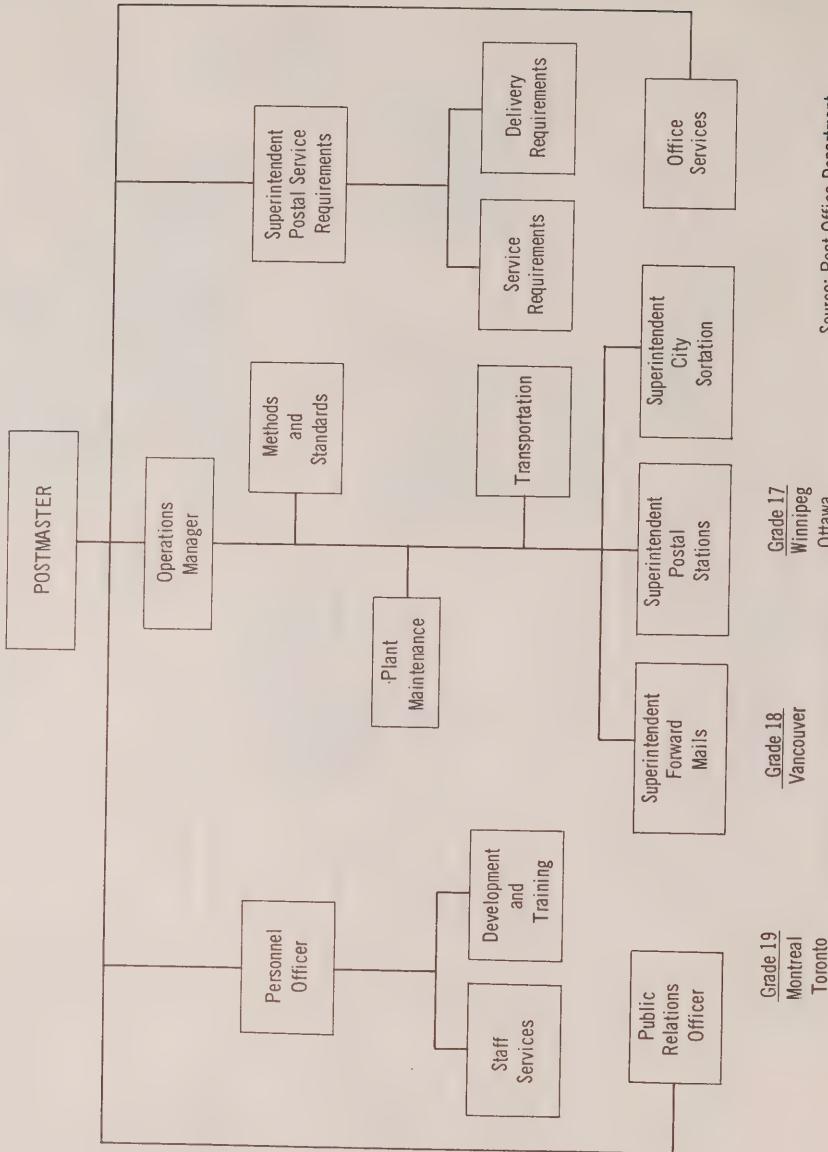


### List of Districts:

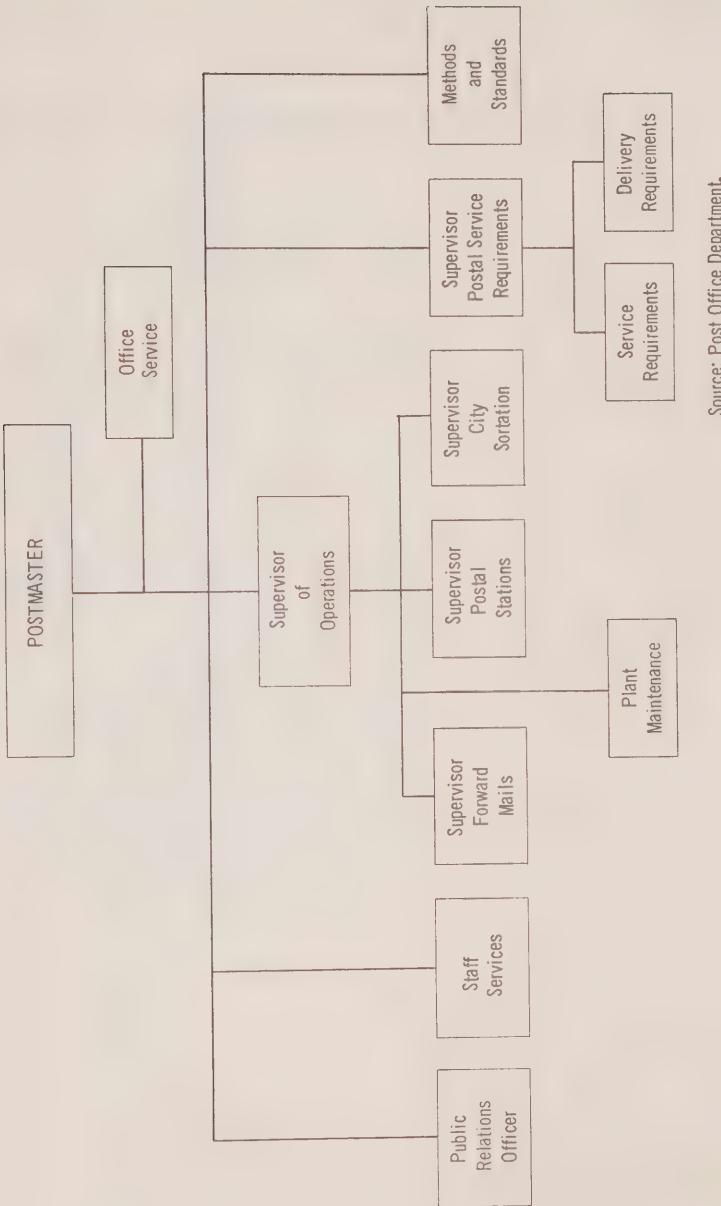
London	North Bay	Winnipeg	Saskatoon	Edmonton	Calgary	Vancouver
St. John's	Halifax	Saint John	Quebec	Montreal	Ottawa	Toronto

Source: Post Office Department.

**POST OFFICES GRADES 17-18-19**  
**ORGANIZATION CHART**



**POST OFFICES GRADE 16**  
ORGANIZATION CHART



Source: Post Office Department.

LIST OF STAFF POST OFFICES GRADES 14 TO 19 INCLUSIVE

GRADE 14

Moncton, N.B.  
Saskatoon, Sask.  
Scarborough, Ont.  
New Westminster, B.C.

GRADE 16

Calgary, Alta.  
Edmonton, Alta.  
Hamilton, Ont.  
Quebec, P.Q.

GRADE 15

Halifax, N.S.  
London, Ont.  
Regina, Sask.  
Victoria, B.C.  
Windsor, Ont.

GRADE 17

Ottawa, Ont.  
Winnipeg, Man.

GRADE 18

Vancouver, B.C.

GRADE 19

Montreal, P.Q.  
Toronto, Ont.

TABLE OF WAGES AND SALARIES FOR NON-SUPERVISORY OPERATING CLASSES

<u>Class</u>	<u>Salary</u>				
Letter Carrier	\$ 4215	\$ 4365	\$ 4515	\$ 4665	\$ 4815
	Salary increases semi-annual up to				\$ 4965
	\$ 4515				\$
Mail Despatcher	4860	5010	5160	5310	5460
Mail Handler	3780	3930	4080	4230	4380
	Salary increases semi-annual up to				4,530
	\$ 4,080				
Part-time & Casual Letter Carrier	\$2.02 per hour				
Part-time & Casual Postal Chauffeur	\$2.02 per hour				
Part-time Postal Clerk 1	\$1.55 per hour for day duty	-	\$1.70 per hour for night duty		
Part-time Postal Clerk 2	\$1.57 per hour for day duty	-	\$1.72 per hour for night duty		
Part-time Mail Handler	\$1.55 per hour for day duty	-	\$1.70 per hour for night duty		
Postal Chauffeur	4215	4365	4515	4665	4815
	Salary increases semi-annual up to				4,965
	\$ 4,515				
Postal Clerk 1	3855	4005	4155	4305	4455
	Salary increases semi-annual up to				4,905
	\$ 4,155				
Postal Clerk 2	4165	4315	4465	4615	4765
	Salary increases semi-annual up to				5,215
	\$ 4,465				
Postal Helper (Part-time or Casual)	\$1.55 per hour - No Night Differential				
Railway Mail Clerk 1	4800	4950	5100	5250	5400
Railway Mail Clerk 2	5460				
Railway Mail Clerk 3	5520				
Railway Mail Clerk 4	5585				
Railway Mail Clerk 5	5645				
Supervisory Letter Carrier	5160	5310	5460		

POSITION GUIDE

ASSISTANT DEPUTY POSTMASTER GENERAL

- PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION -

Function:

Under the general direction of the Deputy Postmaster General, plans, executes and controls a personnel administration programme for approximately 29,000 employees of the Department employed under the authority of the Civil Service Act in a number of groups in each of the Occupational Categories and of which approximately 28,000 are widely dispersed across the country; advises the Deputy Postmaster General and other senior officials of the department on personnel policies and practices; co-ordinates the development and execution of departmental programmes of staffing, classification, employee services, communications and staff relations; provides direction to personnel staff at headquarters and policy direction and functional programme guidance to field personnel staff; provides advice and services on personnel administration matters affecting approximately 13,000 employees appointed or paid under the authority of the Post Office Act.

Duties:

1. Oversees the direction and execution of a comprehensive staffing programme to ensure a sound and co-ordinated approach to organizational planning, manpower planning and utilization, employee appraisal, training, development, and employment practices throughout the department:
  - ensures that staffing policies are compatible with the requirements of appropriate statutes;
  - stimulates a dynamic approach to staffing policies and practices to meet changing requirements.
2. Oversees the direction of the department's personnel classification programme and, to the extent required, ensures a capacity for employee performance appraisal for merit or discretionary in-grade pay purposes.
3. Oversees the direction of a comprehensive employee services programme including the provision throughout the department of positive programmes of health, safety, welfare and incentive awards.
4. Ensures the development and maintenance of a communication programme designed to inform management and employees of departmental and service-wide personnel policies, programmes and procedures.
5. Oversees the direction of the staff relations programme of the department:

- ensures the provision of comprehensive recommendations and advice based on studies and analysis, to departmental and central management on staff management, staff relations, compensation and conditions, discipline and related matters;
- ensures the capacity to interpret to line management and personnel specialists collective agreements and other instruments of authority relating to compensation and conditions of employment;
- ensures the capacity of the department for the effective and consistent application of collective agreements and other instruments relating to terms and conditions of employment;
- ensures the development and maintenance of a grievance procedure and the capacity for preparation of cases for adjudication hearings;
- represents the department as the principal spokesman for the Deputy Postmaster General in consultations with the Treasury Board, the Public Service Staff Relations Board, and in consultations and negotiations with employee organizations.

6. Ensures the provision of a well co-ordinated personnel policy and integrated personnel programmes for the Post Office Department through manuals, directives and functional guidance to field personnel administrators.
7. Provides direct personnel services to the headquarters organization of the department.

Relationships:

1. Reports to the Deputy Postmaster General.
2. Is the representative and senior spokesman for the Deputy Postmaster General in all personnel administration matters with the Civil Service Commission, the Treasury Board, the Public Service Staff Relations Board and with associations representing the department's employees.
3. Acts as the senior departmental representative on negotiating teams during bargaining with agents certified to represent the department's employees.
4. Represents management or advises the Deputy Postmaster General in departmental management - employee consultations or in joint committees established for this purpose.
5. Directs and controls the headquarters staff of the Personnel Branch through subordinate Directors of Staffing, Personnel Classification, Programme Co-ordination and Employee Services, and Staff Relations.
6. On behalf of the Deputy Postmaster General provides policy directives on personnel administration to all levels of departmental management.
7. Provides functional guidance to field personnel specialists on all personnel administration programmes.

POSITION GUIDE

DIRECTOR, STAFFING

Functions:

The development and co-ordination of organizational and manpower planning, appraisal inventory, training, development and employment programmes for the Post Office Department.

Duties:

1. Directs the development and maintenance of a comprehensive manpower records system for all departmental personnel management purposes.
2. Provides through comprehensive studies and analysis, recommendations for improved policies and practices governing the acquisition and utilization of all manpower resources including specifically such matters as:
  - forecasts of the effects of technology, automation and changing management concepts on recruitment sources, selection standards and development and training policies and programmes;
  - organizational planning services for short and long-term programme objectives;
  - the acquisition, deployment and utilization of female employees;
  - the acquisition, deployment and utilization of part-time, seasonal and, casual employees;
  - employee mobility requirements and employee displacement problems;
  - policies and procedures to assist in the harmonious and satisfactory implementation of new methods, procedures, organizational changes and revised production standards.
3. Directs a continuing manpower appraisal and inventory programme designed to identify and record management, supervisory and employee characteristics for purposes of relating manpower resources to requirements and assisting in the identification of both collective and individual training and development needs including such matters as:
  - the development of appraisal policies, techniques and procedures;
  - the development and maintenance of manpower inventories adapted to the needs of the department's occupational composition;

- the continuing evaluation of appraisal programmes and satisfactory co-ordination and/or integration of appraisal activity and promotional, transfer and staff rotational activities;
- the provision of assistance as required, in performance review programmes for purposes of merit pay administration;
- the provision of functional guidance and assistance to appropriate field personnel specialists.

4. Develops and directs a training and career development programme designed to meet the needs of the department at all levels of the organization including such matters as:

- the co-ordination of training objectives with established and approved training requirements;
- the development and interpretation of approved training and career development policies;
- the development and effective utilization of training guides, techniques, curricula, syllabi and manuals;
- the identification of need and the co-ordination of participation of departmental employees in extra-departmental training courses;
- the adequate evaluation of all training programmes;
- the provision of functional guidance and assistance to appropriate field personnel specialists.

5. Develops and directs the employment programme of the department including the co-ordination of and implementation of in-service promotions, transfers and lay offs:

- the provision of administrative and professional assistance to line officers at both headquarters and field offices to ensure a prompt and effective response to requests for employment action;
- the execution of policies, procedures and the provision of assistance in individual appointments for approximately 13,000 positions exempt from the Civil Service Act and such other positions under the Civil Service Act as may be filled by the department under delegated authority;
- consults as required, with headquarters and field officers of the Civil Service Commission.

Relationships:

1. Reports to the Assistant Deputy Postmaster General - Personnel Administration.
2. Supervises the Chiefs of the Divisions of, Manpower Planning, Manpower Appraisal and Inventory, Training and Development, and Employment.
3. Advises senior line officials in determining manpower utilization priorities and objectives.
4. Acts as the principal channel of communication between the department and the Civil Service Commission.
5. Consults as required, with departmental line officials, central agency officials, the Federal Manpower Department, and the department's Systems Engineering, Methods and Standards and Systems and Procedures Units.

POSITION GUIDE

DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL CLASSIFICATION

Functions:

The development and administration of the Post Office Department's position classification programme and the provision of advice and guidance to line managers concerning classification and related pay matters.

Duties:

1. Develops and administers a classification programme for approximately 42,000 employees in a number of groups in each of the occupational categories:
  - formulates classification administration policy for approval;
  - directs the collection, verification and analyses of position information, the writing of job descriptions and the evaluation of jobs and positions;
  - establishes classification work priorities in consort with programme managers and the Assistant Deputy Postmaster General - Personnel Administration;
  - writes or reviews submissions to the central agency supporting classification and pay proposals;
  - reviews and analyzes classification procedures and trends;
  - audits job evaluation decisions to ensure uniformity and consistency in the application of the standards and the maintenance of their integrity;
  - co-ordinates the implementation of procedures required for the delegation of classification authority, including the establishment of classification committees and the training of officers in point rating and other evaluation techniques;
  - proposes modifications to classification and pay standards considered necessary because of changing conditions.
2. Advises departmental managers on the policies, objectives and practices established by the central agencies and the department for position classification and merit pay administration.
3. Supervises a staff of specialists engaged in the classification programme.

4. Participates in the preparation of annual and supplementary personnel estimates:
  - discusses requirements with departmental officers and advises on the appropriateness of classification proposals.
5. Represents management as required, in the hearing of grievances concerning classification matters.
6. Consults, as required, with central agency officials concerning classification standards, pay ranges and job evaluations.
7. Performs other duties such as directing the preparation and revision of departmental instructions on classification procedures and the development and maintenance of classification records.

Relationships:

1. Reports to the Assistant Deputy Postmaster General - Personnel Administration.
2. Supervises nine subordinate classification officers.
3. Maintains effective working relationships with:
  - (i) Department Managers
  - (ii) Central Agency Officials
  - (iii) Personnel Administrators responsible for the Post Office Department's Staff Relations, Staffing and Programme Co-ordination and Employee Services programme.
4. Gives functional direction to personnel administrators in field offices engaged in job analysis, the application of classification standards and implementation of the classification programme.
5. Contacts are made with personnel administrators in other departments to obtain, exchange and discuss information.

Note:

Reference in this position guide to pay matters relate to pay questions for senior managerial positions and to the administration of merit pay programmes.

POSITION GUIDE

DIRECTOR, PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATION & EMPLOYEE SERVICES

Function:

The co-ordination of the department's personnel programmes in the personnel offices of the Postal Districts and the major Post Offices; the direction of the headquarters personnel office and the development, promotion and co-ordination of the Post Office Department's employee services and communications programme.

Duties:

1. Co-ordinates the development and maintenance of a balanced personnel programme and programme capacity for all departmental personnel offices:
  - monitors the demands for service, advice and programmes being made on personnel offices by managers and by functional personnel specialists at headquarters;
  - recommends on the staff capacities of personnel offices to meet the demands placed upon them and on questions of programme priorities;
  - advises the Assistant Deputy Postmaster General - Personnel Administration, on the needs for training, rotation, counselling and general professional development of the field personnel administrators;
  - provides leadership and actively participates in the recruitment, selection, appraisal, training and development, promotion or transfer of personnel administrators and administrative support staff under his functional jurisdiction;
  - recommends on the need for organizational and procedural changes and total staff requirements for personnel offices in the field.
2. Directs the development and maintenance of an effective communication programme for all personnel administration purposes.
3. Directs the development, administration and co-ordination of an employee services programme:
  - recommends and develops health, welfare and safety policies and programmes designed to meet the needs of management and employees;
  - ensures that satisfactory feeding facilities are available to employees;

- consults with various agencies concerning health, welfare and safety matters including the Treasury Board Secretariate concerning approved standards and policies, the Department of National Health and Welfare with respect to Health Services, the Department of Public Works regarding cafeterias, lunch rooms and recreational facilities, the Department of Labour and Provincial Workmen's Compensation Boards regarding accident prevention and compensation matters.
- 4. Directs the development, promotion and co-ordination of a comprehensive suggestion award programme for the Post Office Department:
  - consults with the Incentive Award Board of the Public Service of Canada;
  - provides co-ordinating and secretarial service for the department's Suggestion Award Programme, the Merit Award Programme, the Outstanding Achievement Award Programme and the Long Service Award Programme.
- 5. Evaluates the effects of the communications programme, the employee services programme and the suggestion award programme on employee morale and productivity and proposes appropriate changes as required.

Relationships:

1. Reports to the Assistant Deputy Postmaster General - Personnel Administration.
2. Co-ordinates the programmes of all departmental personnel offices.
3. Supervises the Communications Officer, the Chief Employee Services and the Chief Personnel Administration (Headquarters).
4. Provides functional supervision to field personnel officers and support staff.
5. Maintains close liaison with the Director of Management Audit concerning audits of field personnel offices.
6. Advises senior managers at headquarters on personnel matters, as required.
7. Maintains effective relationship with the Director of Information and Public Relations concerning communication programmes.

POSITION GUIDE

DIRECTOR, STAFF RELATIONS

Functions:

The development and administration of the Post Office Department's staff relations programme.

Duties:

1. Develops and recommends to departmental and central agency officials, staff management, staff relations, compensation and conditions of service policies, plans and procedures:
  - analyses the administration of collective agreements and other instruments of authority that govern terms and conditions of employment;
  - develops and monitors grievance administration;
  - assesses employee morale and the adequacy of disciplinary codes and work rules;
  - assists in developing policy and reviewing the effectiveness of departmental accommodation standards and management practices;
  - identifies and evaluates patterns or trends in staff relations and employee morale emerging from management actions in matters of discipline, grievances and appeals and recommends preventive or remedial action;
  - determines the impact of compensation and conditions of service policies on the achievement of departmental programmes and the maintenance of effective personnel policies, proposes modifications as required.
2. Insures the effective and consistent implementation of collective agreements, regulations and other instruments of authority governing terms and conditions of service:
  - co-ordinates departmental preparation for arbitration tribunals and adjudication hearings;
  - provides interpretations to line officers or secures direction as to interpretation from higher authority or technical or legal specialists;
  - provides advice and guidance to departmental managers on staff management, staff relations and conditions of service matters;

- participates in the training and development of managers and supervisors.
- 3. Represents departmental management or advises line management in consultations with staff associations and participates in collective bargaining at the centre:
  - advises Treasury Board negotiators;
  - prepares facts and arguments and assists in planning management's policy and tactics in dealing with employee requests;
  - prepares studies to illustrate and support departmental management's proposals in consultations and negotiations;
  - acts as member of a negotiating team as required and apprises senior management of developments and progress during negotiations.
- 4. Writes circular letters, directives, and manuals concerning staff relations and conditions of service policies and procedures and prepares articles and speeches relating to these matters.

Relationships:

1. Reports to the Assistant Deputy Postmaster General - Personnel Administration.
2. Advises senior line officers in determining staff relations priorities and objectives.
3. Act as a member of a negotiating team and in the absence of the Assistant Deputy Postmaster General - Personnel Administration, is the principal negotiating officer of the Post Office Department.
4. Represents departmental management in staff relations and conditions of service matters and chairs staff relations management and joint committees.
5. Advises Treasury Board negotiators in collective bargaining.
6. Consults with employee representatives on formal and informal aspects of matters likely to be contentious between employees and management.
7. Provides functional guidance to field staff relations officers.
8. Provides direction and assistance to line officers in the administration of staff relations programmes.
9. Supervises the activities of the Chief, Compensation and Conditions, the Co-ordinator, Grievances and Adjudications and the Planning and Research Officer.

POSITION GUIDE

CHIEF, PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION - MAJOR POST OFFICES

Function:

Implements and administers a general personnel programme in a major Staff Post Office with a population exceeding 1,000 employees in a number of occupational categories and groups.

Duties:

1. Advises the Postmaster and line officers on personnel policy, procedures and practices in such areas as staff relations, performance review and employee appraisal, staffing, training and development, classification, pay and conditions of service:
  - develops and recommends changes in the personnel programme;
  - reviews recommendations of line officers for adherence to departmental policies and practices.
2. Implements, directs and co-ordinates the departmental manpower planning, staffing and development programme in the Staff Post Office:
  - consults with line officers to establish current and long-range staffing and training needs;
  - reviews appraisal and information reporting procedures and recommends appropriate changes;
  - acts as member of appraisal and promotion boards as required;
  - executes delegated authority from the Civil Service Commission in relation to the filling of positions as prescribed by Post Office Headquarters;
  - arranges for appropriate staff training courses inside or outside the Department;
  - evaluates the effectiveness of the training programme and the impact of training on employee's performance and morale.
3. Interprets and adapts departmental staff relations programmes and may supervise a Staff Relations specialist:

- interprets and ensures application of staff relations directives on such matters as health, welfare, safety, discipline, collective agreements, grievances, leave and overtime and prepares reports on related activities;
- advises line officers on the resolution of contentious staff relations matters and proposes appropriate action;
- promotes safety, health and welfare and incentive award programmes;
- explains to line officers and employees the provisions of Acts, Regulations, collective agreements and understandings relating to staff relations and conditions of service matters;
- consults with employees' representatives on problems concerning pay, conditions of work, discipline and promotions and attempts to obtain understanding and agreement.

4. Advises line officers on classification matters and analyses jobs as required.
5. Supervises the Post Office personnel office staff:
  - develops officers and administrative support staff, reviews, evaluates and corrects their deficiencies;
  - delegates authority to subordinates.
6. Keeps informed of current trends and developments in personnel administration in the public and private sectors.
7. Directs through a subordinate supervisor, the work of the personnel record unit which provides administrative support by carrying out and recording appointments, transfers, separations, changes in pay, deductions, benefits, etc.

Relationships:

1. Reports to the Postmaster.
2. Receives functional supervision in personnel matters from Headquarters.
3. Supervises subordinates.
4. Maintains effective working relationships with line officers at all levels.
5. Represents the Department in consultations with staff associations at the district level.
6. Maintains effective functional relationships with officials of the Civil Service Commission, Department of National Health and Welfare and the Federal Manpower Department.
7. Consults with Post Office Department and other regional or district personnel administrators to exchange information and data on personnel policies and practices.
8. Maintains contact with local personnel associations and educational institutes.

POSITION GUIDE

DISTRICT PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATOR

Function:

Implements and administers a general personnel programme in a Postal District. Advises the District Director, district office administrators and Postmasters on personnel policy, procedures and practices in such areas as staffing, classification, employee services, communications and staff relations.

Duties:

1. Receives requests for employment actions for district needs and takes employment action within delegated authority:
  - determines whether vacancies should be filled by promotion from within or by recruitment from outside the department;
  - obtains, reviews and approves statements of duties and qualifications;
  - represents or arranges representation of the district on competition boards;
  - organizes the efforts of all offices within the district to assume delegated authority for initial recruitment and selection from the Regional Offices of the Civil Service Commission;
  - chairs or arranges for chairman and board members for promotional boards;
  - reviews the results of promotional boards and advises on selections and checks for adherence to approved policies and procedures;
  - monitors the results of district recruiting and selection efforts and advises on the needs for changes in policy, practice or procedure;
  - co-ordinates the preparation for appeal board hearings and may represent the department at such hearings.
2. Co-ordinates the implementation of the district's manpower appraisal programmes in accordance with departmental policy and practice:
  - consults with district office administrators and Postmasters to ensure full understanding of the objectives and priorities of manpower planning and appraisal programmes;

- integrates manpower appraisal and promotional programmes;
- ensures consistency in the application of appraisal standards and in the recording of appraisal results;
- analyzes statistical and other data from the manpower records system and identifies emerging trends and their implications.

3. Identifies collective and individual training and career development needs and conducts, or promotes the conduct of approved training programmes:

- supervises a staff of training officers or provides functional assistance to line officers in employee induction, skill training, and supervisory and operational training programmes;
- evaluates the impact of training on employee performance, production and morale through evaluation of courses and consultations with line officials and district Postmasters.

4. Promotes employee services programmes in the areas of health, welfare, safety counselling and incentive awards:

- administers the district accident prevention programme by analyzing statistics on accidents and promoting the achievement of approved standards of safety;
- co-ordinates district health programmes including sanitation campaigns, clinics, health surveys, feeding and lunch room facilities, first aid facilities and staff and arrangements for emergency health treatment;
- provides employee counselling services and advises line managers on counselling problems and techniques;
- promotes the department's incentive award programmes through publicity, talks to line managers and employees and through committee activities; may act as secretary of district incentive award committees.

5. Promotes and facilitates good management-employee communication and advises the District Director on communication problems.

6. Interprets and assists in the implementation of departmental staff relations programme:

- interprets collective agreements or seeks authoritative interpretations as required;
- ensures the consistent application of all instruments of authority relating to compensation, discipline and conditions of employment deriving either from collective agreements or from statute law or from central agency or departmental authority;

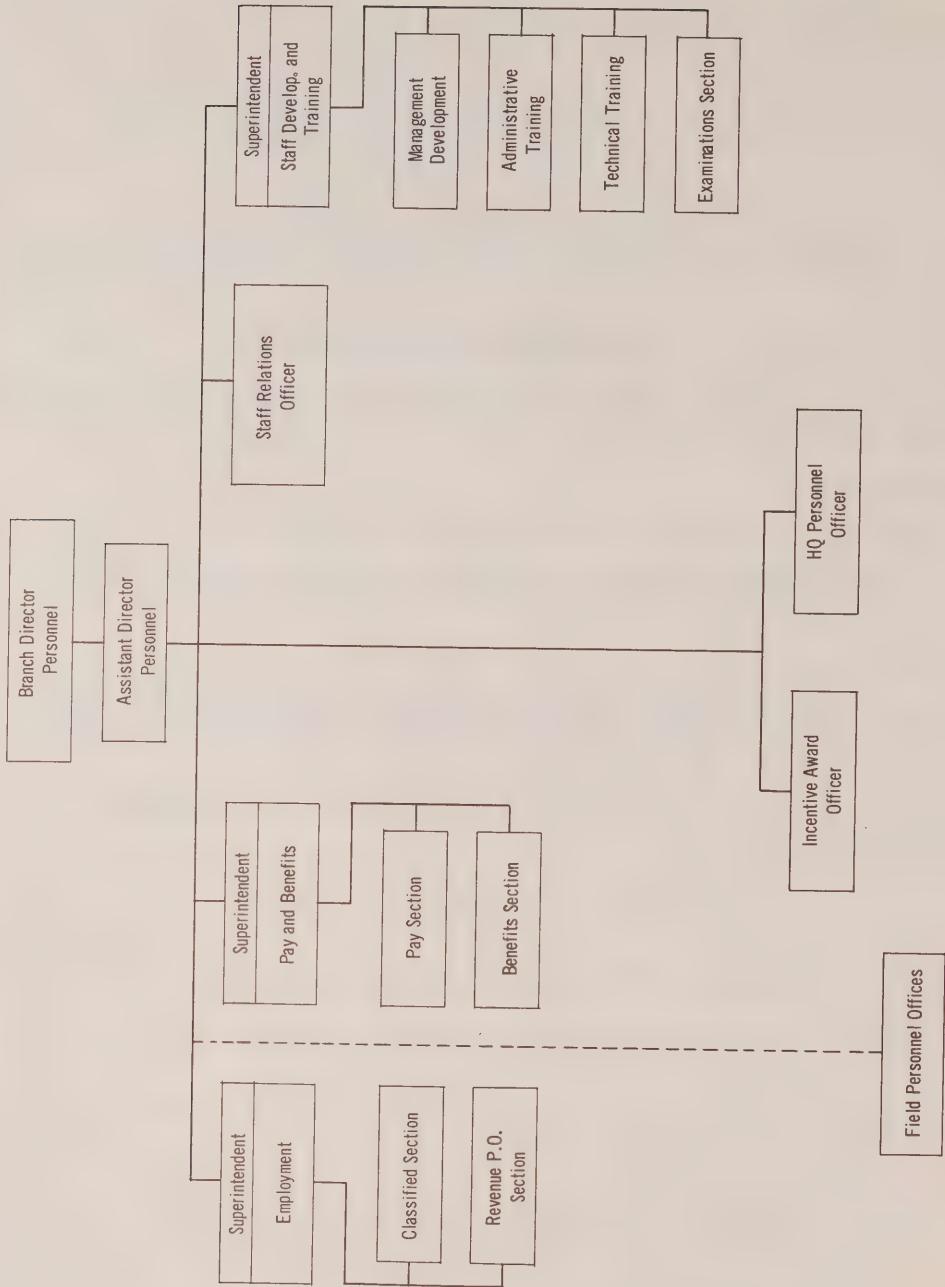
- develops and assists in the maintenance of district grievance procedures and monitors the grievance systems;
- advises the District Director and Postmasters on all staff relations problems and may represent the District Director in district discussions and consultations with staff associations;
- may supervise a full-time staff relations officer.

7. Advises line managers on classification matters, carries out job analysis and prepares district submissions to the Director of Personnel Classification.
8. Ensures the maintenance of approved personnel records.
9. Travels extensively throughout the District to provide advice, service and support to Postmasters.

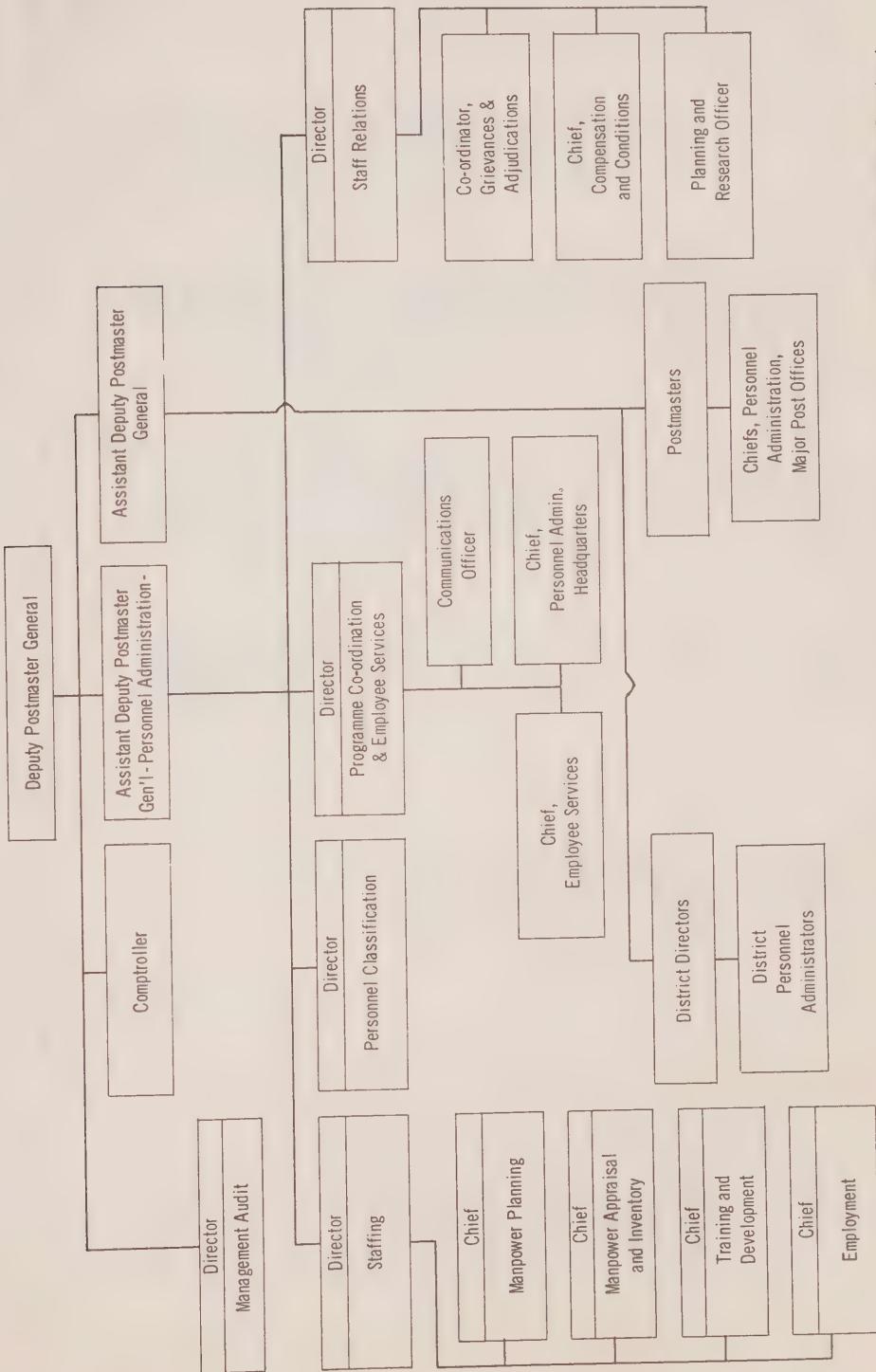
Relationships:

1. Reports to the District Director of Postal Services.
2. Receives functional advice and assistance from various personnel specialists at headquarters.
3. Supervises a staff of officers and support staff.
4. Maintains effective relationships with officials of the Civil Service Commission, the Federal Manpower Department, and the Department of National Health and Welfare.
5. Maintains contact with local personnel associations and educational institutions.

## PRESENT ORGANIZATION PERSONNEL BRANCH



## PROPOSED ORGANIZATION PERSONNEL BRANCH



GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYEES IN THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT

- AS OF MARCH 31, 1966 -

<u>Location</u>	<u>DPMC</u>	<u>ADPMG</u>	<u>Comotroller</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Sub Total</u>
HQ - Ottawa	179	245	648	1067	1,067
<u>Districts</u>	<u>Staff Post Offices</u>	<u>Semi-Staff</u>	<u>District Office</u>	<u>Revenue Post Offices</u>	<u>Total</u>
Toronto	2881	273	203	402	3759
Quebec	1329	577	691	132	2729
London	1751	355	92	257	2455
Montreal	1377	413	167	458	2415
Vancouver	1231	311	93	416	2051
Calgary	1163	377	49	483	2072
Edmonton	985	360	48	498	1891
Halifax	817	254	83	613	1767
Saskatoon	746	424	60	652	1882
Winnipeg	389	359	94	641	1483
Ottawa	686	299	73	472	1530
Saint John	627	195	89	513	1424
North Bay	518	260	58	335	1171
St. John's	237	163	80	619	1099
					27,728
<u>Major Staff Post Offices</u>	<u>Full Time</u>	<u>Part Time</u>	<u>Total</u>		
Montreal	3837	946	4783		
Toronto	3764	851	4615		
Vancouver	1535	145	1680		
Winnipeg	1118	54	1172		
Ottawa	919	70	989		
					12,239
Grand Total					<u>42,034</u>

- 322 -

NOTE: Not included in the above Table are 2,224 Sub Postmasters who are not employees in any direct sense.

APPENDIX Q

L I S T   O F   R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S



## LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

### CHAPTER 5

#### COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

1. That the staff organizations concerned willingly agree to give a fair trial to the methods and procedures of collective bargaining which are contained in Bill C-17C entitled "Public Service Staff Relations Act", if this Bill should remain in its present form.
2. That the appropriate authorities proceed very shortly with a thorough study of the advisability of according the Post Office Department the status of a Crown Corporation, taking into due consideration the national interest as well as the economic and social consequences of such a change.

### CHAPTER 6

#### CONSULTATION

3. That, starting immediately, two local joint committees be set up in every Staff Post Office, grades 14 to 19 inclusive, one for the postal clerks and the other for letter carriers.
4. That these committees, depending upon local conditions, be composed of an equal number of representatives of the postal clerks or letter carriers and of representatives of local management.
5. That these committees hold meetings at least once a month.
6. That all questions of general interest dealing with local working conditions of postal workers or letter carriers be the subject of discussions, negotiations and recommendations in these committees.

7. That Headquarters issue precise instructions to district directors and postmasters to make available to these committees all the information available which might help solve the problems under review.
8. That, in order to facilitate these consultations, an agenda be drawn up of a permanent but flexible nature and that minutes of these meetings be taken, written up, approved and distributed to all concerned.
9. That the local joint committees be kept informed of the concrete results obtained from their discussions, of the progress made, or the difficulties encountered.
10. That, in cases of disagreement, the representatives of the local branches on these committees be allowed to report back to their members and that these branches, through their officers and with or without the assistance of their area representatives, make representations to the district director or postmaster in post offices, grades 17, 18 and 19.
11. That, where disagreements are not settled, reports be sent to the national officers of the organizations.
12. That the same type of local joint committees be set up in every Staff Post Office, grades 9 to 13 inclusive, if such is the wish of the majority of the employees in these Post Offices.
13. That the same procedure apply in the case of railway mail clerks at the district level.
14. That two national joint committees be set up at Ottawa, one for postal workers and one for letter carriers.
15. That, as far as possible, these committees be set up and operate in the same manner as the local joint committees.
16. That all matters of general interest dealing with working conditions of postal workers or letter carriers, on a national basis, be the subject of discussions, negotiations and recommendations in these committees.
17. That railway mail clerks benefit from the same advantages in accordance with a procedure adapted to their own conditions of work.

CHAPTER 7

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

18. That the Department take early action to ensure that its field managers are fully conversant with the extent of their authority, duties and financial responsibilities.
19. That the Department consult with the staff organizations, either at the national or local level, to determine work areas where difficulties have been encountered due to insufficient delegated authority and that it take corrective measures accordingly.

CHAPTER 8

MANPOWER

20. That the appropriate authorities recognize the need for a special status for the Department with much greater flexibility so that it may at the local and district levels cope with any shortage in personnel on short notice, subject to a reasonable post-audit control.
21. That the Department put into operation the new management audit system as soon as possible, so that it may be better informed of its personnel requirements.
22. That once this system is found satisfactory the Department delegate to its district directors and its postmasters in grades 19, 18 and 17, wide powers so that they may be able to cope with the need for additional manpower.
23. That the Department interview each employee resigning from the postal service and determine the real reasons for his departure.
24. That the Department in areas where there is a high turnover rate use all means available to secure the necessary personnel.
25. That the Department, with the co-operation of the local joint committees, make a survey of the number of part-time and casual employees on strength in each staff post office.

26. That detailed instructions be given to postmasters and to district directors to supply these committees with all information necessary for the preparation of these surveys and their study.
27. That the Department act immediately whenever these surveys indicate that neither the letter nor the intent of the Civil Service Regulations or of the Personnel Manual dealing with the hiring and retention of these employees are respected, and that they seek to replace them with full-time employees.
28. That in the future each postmaster in a staff post office display monthly reports on the number of part-time and casual employees in his office together with the number of hours during which they have worked.
29. That the Department, at the national joint committee level, attempt to come to an understanding with the staff organizations as to the meaning and extent of the words "peak period" and "emergency situation".
30. That the Department make constant checks on the utilization of part-time and casual employees in staff post offices to ensure that postmasters do not hire them to fill gaps in the permanent establishment.
31. That the Department develop a method to keep itself posted, as well as the district directors, on all cases of abuse in that field.
32. That the Department examine the possibility of resolving the above-mentioned problems by determining ahead of time the percentage of part-time employees who may be allowed to work in post offices in proportion to the total number of full-time employees assigned therein.
33. That, to ensure that the letter and intent of the Civil Service Regulations are respected regarding the possible review of the situation after six months of employment for casual employees, the Department be at all times in a position to determine the accumulated total of actual periods of casual employment.
34. That these statistics be made available to the Civil Service Commission to enable it, if need be, to decide if it should extend the use of the services of casual workers who have reached the normal six months of employment.

35. That, in the future, all recruiting and hiring of part-time and casual employees be done through the National Employment Service.

36. That the Department institute without delay a monthly report system on its staff strength and that these reports be made available to local joint committees.

37. That part-time employees be granted an equitable allowance for sick or special leave with pay under the same conditions as are applicable to full-time employees.

38. That the Department continue to make a close study each year of the need to extend the period during which Christmas helpers are required, taking into account more particularly any large increases in the volume of mail in recent years.

39. That wherever possible postmasters consult with local joint committees before fixing the hiring dates for Christmas help and before making changes required during this period.

40. That postmasters be less hesitant to use their authority to assign sufficient Christmas help to clerical staff and letter carriers as soon as required.

41. That neither the postal clerks nor the letter carriers be held responsible for infractions or errors committed by Christmas helpers over whom no adequate control is possible.

#### CHAPTER 9

#### CLASSIFICATION OF POSITIONS

42. That a point rating scale be used for the classification of all non-supervisory operating positions in the Post Office.

43. That the staff organizations be consulted, as soon as possible, by the Department and the Bureau of Classification Revision of the Civil Service Commission in the revision of the postal employee classes at each step in the revision process.

44. That postal employees reach the maximum of their salary in three years.

45. That postal clerks 1 and 2 be immediately integrated into one and the same class, pending the acceptance of an appropriate point rating scale for both classes.

46. That the words "other related duties" be used in job descriptions for the Post Office and that mention also be made of all the duties which are recognized as forming part of the regular duties of the employees even if these duties are not considered part of the normal daily duties.

## CHAPTER 10

### THE WORK WEEK

47. That local joint committees in each staff post office be authorized to start as soon as possible a detailed examination of working hours and shift schedules, to study all the possibilities for improvement and to make the recommendations having due regard to the requirements of the postal service.

48. That the Department, on the other hand, make a thorough study of the flow of work from the beginning to the end of daily operations.

49. That, for this purpose, the Department call on the services of outside consultants and recognize the validity of the basic guiding principles set out in this Report.

50. That hours of work be fixed as much as possible to coincide with the normal operation of public transportation.

51. That the Department make an effort to discontinue broken days in shift schedules as well as the assignment of employees to different shifts over short periods.

52. That employees be allowed a minimum of 8 hours rest, plus travel time, between each shift change.

53. That no member of the staff be obliged to work after 10.30 p.m., at the latest, on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

54. That the Department reduce to a strict minimum the number of employees required to work on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

55. That postal employees, subject to their right to put forward their points of view and discuss the pros and cons with the Department, should recognize that it is justified in organizing work on week-ends as it sees fit.

56. That the appropriate authorities, on the other hand, agree to pay additional remuneration to all employees required to work on week-ends even if this work is part of their normal scheduled weekly hours.

57. That the rate of such additional remuneration be negotiated under the proposed collective bargaining negotiations.

58. That the responsible authorities conduct a thorough study of the consequences of the adoption of a policy aimed at curtailing postal service on week-ends.

59. That this study include amongst other things:

- a) the possibility of cancelling all letter carrier delivery on Saturdays to private homes, and limiting this service to the bare minimum on that day to businesses and commercial establishments;
- b) the possibility of closing down wicket service on Saturday afternoons and of closing it down completely in those areas where operating costs consistently exceed revenue;
- c) the possibility of suspending postal operations between the midnight shift on Friday and the evening shift on Sunday at those locations where this is practical, i.e., where no serious delay in mail delivery would occur;
- d) the possibility in those offices where it would not be practical to curtail Saturday delivery and wicket service, of employing a minimum staff for the sale of money orders, etc., sorting, preparation and delivery of only first class mail matter along with C.O.D.'s and registered mail and the dispatching of mail of these classes.

60. That the Department and the staff organizations, through the national joint committees, clarify the methods and procedures to be followed in the granting of overtime and its sharing among employees.

61. That a minimum of three hours overtime be guaranteed to any employee who, having already worked his normal shift, is asked to return to work after he has left the office.
62. That part-time, casual and new employees on probation be paid overtime for each hour they are required to work beyond their normal working day.
63. That the Department clarify its directives concerning its employees' right to a meal break of at least one full half hour during their eight hour day.
64. That the Department, through its postmasters, ensure that employees' immediate supervisors understand and conform to these directives.
65. That employees deprived of a meal break against their will take advantage of all avenues of redress open to them.
66. That the meal break be as near halfway through the working day as possible.
67. That any change affecting an employee's meal period be put into effect only after consultation with him and, if agreement cannot be reached, with representatives from his local branch.
68. That through local joint committees discussions be initiated to decide locally whether the lunch break should be one hour instead of half an hour.
69. That, from now until all "straight through" walks are eliminated, the Department ensure that letter carriers assigned to these walks have a suitable place to eat lunch and, if such a place is not available, that it take all the necessary measures to solve the problem including transportation of letter carriers by taxi if necessary.
70. That the Department after consultation with the local joint committees install more time clocks wherever deemed essential.
71. That coffee breaks be recognized as a right rather than just a privilege.
72. That, until further notice, coffee breaks remain limited to ten minutes but that the Department ensure that all employees can derive benefit from it.
73. That, as far as possible, coffee breaks be taken near the middle of each half shift, whether it be day, evening or night.

74. That the appropriate authorities recognize, in principle, that some post office employees are entitled to five minutes wash-up time before meals and before leaving the office.
75. That the Department discuss relevant controls with the staff organizations, through national joint committees.
76. That once a firm rule is established, Headquarters refer any decision of a local nature to postmasters and district directors.

## CHAPTER 11

### PAY AND ALLOWANCES

77. That, from now on, postal employees receive their annual salary every two weeks, in 26 fixed periods per year, instead of 24.
78. That postmasters do not fail to give pay cheques to employees a few days ahead of their vacation leave, if cheques are on hand.
79. That by one or more amendments to the Civil Service Act and Regulations or any other document it be recognized that a post office employee is entitled to acting pay after he has performed the duties of a position higher than the one he holds for five working days, whether consecutive or cumulative, and for as long as he holds such a position.
80. That the rate of the night differential remain unchanged for the time being.
81. That the staff organizations study the possibility of adopting a new formula to establish the night differential on the basis of a percentage of the basic salary.
82. That the staff organizations, if they think it advisable, discuss this new formula during the forthcoming collective negotiations.
83. That all full-time employees be entitled to the night differential of 15 cents for each hour of work performed between 5 p.m. and 7 a.m., without exception.
84. That casual employees, like full-time employees, receive the night differential.

85. That the Department revert to the practice in effect prior to August, 1965, for the payment of the boot allowance and that this amount not be considered as part of the basic salary.
86. That the Department consider the provision of free safety boots for those employees who have to handle heavy and bulky mail bags on a regular basis.
87. That post office employees through their local branches communicate to their national Headquarters all problems and suggestions of the kind referred to in this Report concerning uniforms or clothing.
88. That the national leaders submit these problems and suggestions, if they see fit to do so, to the joint Uniform Committee.
89. That this committee study these suggestions and make recommendations which it considers fair and reasonable.
90. That the Department, insofar as possible, conform to these proposals.
91. That the Department supply coveralls to railway mail clerks.

#### CHAPTER 12

#### SENIORITY

92. That the Department agree to determine definitely, through local joint committees, what positions should be designated as "preferred assignments" in each staff post office.

#### CHAPTER 13

#### LEAVE

93. That the official period of vacation leave be spread over 48 weeks from January 1 to November 30 inclusive, each year.
94. That during this period the weeks between June 15 and September 15 be designated as "preferred".
95. That employees with 20 or more years service be allowed to choose their holidays, by order of seniority, either within or outside this "preferred" period.

96. That if these employees choose their holidays outside the "preferred" period they be entitled to take them all at once, in four consecutive weeks.

97. That if they do not so choose they hold to the present system and take three "preferred" weeks and then one "non-preferred" week, i.e., outside the period June 15 to September 15.

98. That employees with less than 20 years service be divided into two groups according to seniority so that, once every two years, each group will be entitled to at least two "preferred" weeks, the third week being taken outside the "preferred" period if necessary.

99. That employees with more than 15 but less than 20 years service, who will thus be prevented for the next five years from taking full advantage of their present entitlement to three consecutive "preferred" weeks, be entitled as a bonus, if they so request, to a 'fourth week' holiday in addition to the present three, with the express condition, however, that they take all four weeks during the "non-preferred" period.

100. That the Department, once more, remind the district directors and postmasters that the employees' vacation leave schedule is and must remain for the exclusive use of full-time non-supervisory operating employees.

101. That, in future, only in obvious cases of abuse should absence on sick leave be checked, and that home visits be made at a reasonable hour. In all cases and no matter who is contacted, discretion and good judgment be used.

102. That the Department carry out a detailed study of the normal use and abuse of sick leave.

103. That it draw up a chart to pinpoint its occurrence and work out a system to identify at a glance those employees who are about to abuse the privilege or who are already doing so.

104. That the Department start an instructional programme to teach supervisors their responsibilities and duties in this area.

105. That the Department notify each employee when he has taken five days of casual sick leave out of the permissible seven days, not to threaten him but to do him a service, and that for this purpose Headquarters draft a form letter with appropriate working for use by the field offices.

106. That the Civil Service Regulations be amended to allow postal employees who are official delegates to conventions of their organizations leave without pay as a right.
107. That a reasonable number of such delegates be selected depending on the postal districts they represent.
108. That travel time to and from the convention be included.
109. That at least one week's prior notice be given by the staff organizations in each case.

#### CHAPTER 14

##### PROFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS

110. That postal clerks and railway mail clerks who have to take departmental examinations comply with the new policy adopted by the Department so that it might be possible in time to assess its true value.
111. That, if need be, the Department discuss with the staff organizations any change in this proposed policy which might prove effective, necessary or reasonable.

#### CHAPTER 15

##### COMPETITIONS AND PROMOTIONS

112. That lists be posted in every staff post office showing future probable or possible promotions to postal officers 1, 2 or 3.
113. That employees be invited to enter their names on these lists.
114. That steps be taken to give each employee whose name appears on the list equal opportunity to carry out duties or tasks to enable him to improve his promotion possibilities.
115. That the Department refrain from appointing as a member of a competition rating board the immediate supervisor of one or more applicants.
116. That in promotions more consideration be given to a candidate's leadership abilities.

117. That all reports available to the rating board, be they called "confidential" or not, be shown to the applicants concerned and that these applicants be granted the right to question their content if they so desire.

118. That, until further notice, a representative of the staff organizations concerned sit in at meetings and discussions of the rating boards, as an observer.

119. That the staff organizations, if they deem it appropriate, discuss with the Department the advantages of introducing a common entrance examination in the Post Office Department for all entrance classes and at the same time raise the minimum educational requirements.

120. That unsuccessful applicants in competitions consult the rating board on the reasons for their failure and thus be informed of their shortcomings taking into account the basic requirements accepted by the rating board for the said competition.

## CHAPTER 16

### DISCIPLINE

121. That, as proposed, the Department abolish the system of temporary salary reductions in matters of discipline.

122. That the Department complete the preparation of its new code of discipline as soon as possible.

123. That as soon as it is ready this code be discussed with the national officers of the staff organizations through the national joint committees.

124. That once the code has been revised it be put into effect immediately.

125. That both the Department and the staff organizations make the necessary arrangements to see that the code is clearly understood by all interested parties.

126. That all levels - district directors, postmasters, their immediate assistants, supervisors, as well as employees - make an honest effort to ensure that the new code of discipline is put into practice according to the letter and intent.

127. That no remark, note or warning be placed on the personal file of an employee without his knowledge.

128. That an employee be required to sign these remarks, notes or warnings and to state whether or not he agrees with their content.

129. That any employee who believes he has been wronged under such circumstances be given the right not only to complain to the appropriate person but also, if he so wishes, to make use of the grievance procedure.

130. That all errors, infractions or offences placed on the personal history file of an employee be removed after two years, as long as that same employee does not repeat the same error, infraction, or offence during these two years.

#### CHAPTER 17

##### GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

131. That the Department and the staff organizations be given the authority and be free to adopt a grievance procedure which really takes into consideration all aspects and problems which make the Post Office Department, beyond a doubt, a special and unique department.

132. That postal employees be given the right to have recourse to final and binding adjudication for any grievances arising from any action taken against them by the Department and which is not settled to their satisfaction.

#### CHAPTER 18

##### APPEALS TO THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

133. That, when a postal employee who is demoted or dismissed submits an appeal, the Civil Service Commission appoint to the Appeal Board one person nominated by the staff organization to which the employee belongs and one by the Department.

134. That the same procedure apply in an appeal by a candidate not promoted, every time an employee so requests or, failing this, that the Civil Service Commission agree to the presence of an observer selected by such an organization as long as there is no objection from the appellant.

135. That, in future, the Civil Service Commission should not decide to reject or amend the recommendations made by an Appeal Board without inviting the interested parties, including the Department, to submit their viewpoints, and without hearing them, unless they themselves decline to do so.

136. That a person selected by the employee to represent him before an Appeal Board be allowed to examine the personal file of this employee.

137. That section 49 of the Civil Service Act or section 28(3) of Bill C-181 (if necessary) be amended to allow a new employee on probation to appeal against the decision of a deputy head to reject him.

#### CHAPTER 19

##### INVESTIGATIONS

138. That, in future, any postal employee being interrogated by one or more departmental investigators be entitled to demand the presence either of a representative of the staff organization of which he is a member or of a lawyer.

#### CHAPTER 20

##### OBSESSION GALLERIES

139. That the Department issue further instructions emphasizing the restricted use of the observation galleries.

#### CHAPTER 21

##### POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

140. That, by means of one or more amendments, Parliament grant non-supervisory operating employees in the Post Office Department the right to engage in "partisan work" in connection with any party or to engage in work for or against a candidate (or on his own behalf) for election as a member of the House of Commons, a member of the legislature of a province or a member of the Council of the Yukon or the Northwest Territories, all these activities taking place, of course, outside the employees' working hours.

141. That, by one or more amendments, Parliament allow these same employees, during their off duty hours, to contribute, receive or in any way deal with any money for the funds of a candidate or of any political party.

142. That, by means of one or more amendments, Parliament grant the non-supervisory operating staff in the Post Office Department the right to stand as candidates in federal elections (general or by-elections) or in provincial elections (general or by-elections).

143. That in order to run as a candidate and during the election itself, any non-supervisory operating employee be entitled to leave without pay for a reasonable length of time, with due consideration being given to the geographical location of the electoral riding in which he wishes to be a candidate.

144. That if this employee fails to be selected as a candidate or fails to get elected, he be allowed, during the following eight days, to be reinstated without losing any of his rights or privileges as a civil servant.

145. That if elected, he be required to resign immediately.

## CHAPTER 22

### TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

146. That the Department make every possible effort to obtain the qualified staff required to carry out its training and development program.

147. That local joint committees be entitled to submit for study and consideration all problems that may be created by the actions, behaviour or attitude of the supervisors.

148. That top priority be given to courses in human relations for supervisors.

149. That the Department revise its selection practices in the rotation of staff within the same section or between sections after consultation at the national joint committee level.

150. That the appraisal and performance review program instituted by the Department be applied, as soon as possible, to non-supervisory operating personnel to identify their true potential and to meet their training and production needs.

151. That the Department prepare a loose leaf induction kit for its employees setting out their main conditions of employment as well as their duties and responsibilities.

152. That this kit be kept up to date.

### CHAPTER 23

#### DIRECTIVES AND INSTRUCTIONS

153. That the Department use its Directives Management Unit to ensure that its regulations, directives, and instructions are complete, easy to understand and accompanied by an index with appropriate references.

154. That the Department consult with the national joint committees before issuing or amending regulations affecting the employees' conditions of work.

155. That the staff organizations make specific recommendations about the sections of the Post Office Act, the manuals, the regulations, the directives or instructions which, in their opinion, should be amended or clarified.

### CHAPTER 24

#### ENVIRONMENTAL AND PHYSICAL WORKING CONDITIONS

156. That the Department supply its employees with all information necessary to enable them to understand clearly the rights and privileges they may exercise and the claims they may make in cases of accidents on duty; this information to take into account the Government Employees Compensation Act and the Civil Service Regulations as well as the Workmen's Compensation Act of the province in which they are employed.

157. That, automatically, and without being specifically requested, the Department forward to an employee who has been the victim of an accident, any report which it prepares for the intention of a provincial Workmen's Compensation Board or for the federal Department of Labour.

158. That a thorough survey be made, at once, in every post office, to identify accident hazards of all kinds.

159. That this survey be made with the co-operation of local committees.

160. That for this purpose, Headquarters authorize the postmasters and committees to ask inspectors of provincial Workmen's Compensation Boards or of municipal safety services to make recommendations and that this procedure be followed at least until such time as the Federal Government adopts permanent regulations.

161. That this survey, once completed, be forwarded to Headquarters, to district directors and to postmasters in staff post offices, grades 19, 18 and 17.

162. That immediate steps be taken to ensure that all accident hazards mentioned in these surveys are eliminated.

163. That Headquarters continue to acknowledge the authority of local joint committees in this matter and agree to take their recommendations into consideration.

164. That the appropriate authorities, including the Department, carry out, as soon as possible, the basic reforms which the latter proposes adopting in matters of safety and which are mentioned in this Report.

165. That the Department, with the co-operation of the Department of National Health and Welfare, make a study of the incidence of heart disease and intestinal disorders among letter carriers and that the results of this study be made available to the Letter Carriers' Union.

166. That a joint committee be established at the request of the above-mentioned Union to determine whether these illnesses or any other illness, considered to occur frequently with letter carriers, have the characteristics of so-called "occupational diseases" and if in the affirmative, that the Governor General in Council intervene and exercise the powers conferred by virtue of section 7 of the Government Employees Compensation Act.

167. That the Department direct its postmasters to inspect the first-aid kits in their respective post offices.

168. That, whenever these kits do not contain the medical supplies listed by the Department of National Health and Welfare, immediate action be taken to correct the situation.

169. That the local joint committees, with the co-operation of the postmasters, see that the first-aid kits are always stocked with the required medical supplies.

170. That the Department undertake a campaign to encourage a number of its employees to take first-aid courses and that, for this purpose, it grant leave with pay whenever warranted.

171. That employees who have received their first-aid certificates be paid additional remuneration in line with the additional responsibilities assigned to them.

172. That Treasury Board and the Department of National Health and Welfare authorize the Post Office Department to hire one full-time nurse for every post office with an approximate total establishment of 500 employees.

173. That a list of doctors available in an emergency be posted in prominent places.

174. That Headquarters remind all concerned that there are sufficient equipment and supplies and that the maintenance or replacement of worn-out items should not be neglected.

175. That the Department supply the staff organizations with catalogues and scales of issue of supplies to enable them to keep their local representatives well posted.

176. That, in every post office, through local joint committees an inventory be carried out concerning the condition of the equipment and supplies on hand and the need to obtain furniture, equipment, supplies or other accessories.

177. That postmasters and district directors immediately take the necessary steps to correct the deficiencies identified through this inventory.

178. That more authority be delegated to district directors and postmasters concerning maintenance, minor repairs and renovations of post offices.

179. That, wherever necessary, a better co-ordination be sought, between the Post Office Department and other departments responsible for maintenance, to obtain more expeditious service.

180. That Headquarters instruct postmasters that a mail sorter is entitled to use his stool whenever he pleases.

181. That the Department study the possibility of acquiring a more comfortable type stool and of covering the floor in front of the sorting cases with some material to ease the strain.

182. That the Department take the necessary steps so that employees working evening or night shifts may have the use of lunch rooms or cafeterias or, failing this, that it supply them with hot-plates or automatic dispensers.
183. That the Department continue to make vigorous representations to the railway companies to obtain an improvement in physical and environmental working conditions in railway mail cars.
184. That, wherever possible, and especially with cars expected to remain in service, the Department arrange to have the openings to the baggage compartment enlarged.
185. That the Department exercise greater care to ensure that post offices are kept suitably clean and that it issue instructions accordingly.
186. That postmasters, either personally or through a person delegated by them, make regular inspection tours to check on the cleanliness of the post offices under their management.
187. That postmasters correct the situation in all cases where they see the caretaker or the cleaner not doing his work satisfactorily.
188. That the Department recognize the right of local joint committees to make recommendations on this matter.
189. That the Department continue its research in order to find the most practical solution regarding the cleaning of mail bags.
190. That, in preparing plans for new post offices, the appropriate authorities take into further consideration all expected postal service expansion for the following ten years and of the probable consequences of this expansion from all standpoints, including that of the comfort and welfare of non-supervisory operating personnel.
191. That mobile partitions be used in new post offices to facilitate the rearrangement of the working premises should the need arise.
192. That air-conditioning systems be installed in all future staff post offices providing the climate of the region warrants it.

193. That, failing to provide such installation in existing staff post offices, the necessary steps be taken to ensure adequate ventilation for employees in all areas where they are required to work.

194. That a complete inspection be made of each staff post office, of each postal station and of each railway mail car, to ensure that the lighting is both satisfactory and in accordance with established standards and codes.

195. That this inspection be carried out through local joint committees.

196. That postmasters review periodically the agreements for the transportation of employees, especially in cases when public transportation is not available.

197. That the Department undertake a complete study of the carriers proposal to rescind the regulation prohibiting the use of their privately owned cars in carrying out their duties.

198. That after this study is completed, the Department discuss the pros and cons with the Letter Carriers' Union, first at the national level and if necessary at the local level.

199. That the Department assume responsibility for providing transportation to employees required to work overtime, without sufficient notice, after public transportation has stopped operating.

200. That, when planning the construction of new post offices, measures be taken to ensure postal employees adequate parking facilities particularly for those on evening and night shifts.

201. That, in the future, bearing in mind local conditions, the Department allocate available parking spaces to employees according to their needs rather than on a first-come-first-served basis, and that it set as basic criteria the distance the employee must travel as well as the availability of public transportation.

202. That where employees have an equal need for parking spaces, seniority be the deciding factor.

203. That the Department, where limited parking facilities are available, make every effort to adjust shift schedules to coincide with the operating hours of public transportation.

204. That the use of parking spaces for contractors' vehicles be strictly prohibited, except when it is an immediate operational requirement.

205. That consideration be given by the Department, always bearing in mind local conditions, to the feasibility of allocating parking spaces on a rotation basis so that a greater number of employees may enjoy this privilege.

206. That every effort be made by the Department to obtain parking spaces from the Department of Public Works for evening and night shift workers, bearing in mind that some persons using spaces allocated to other departments may have less priority.

207. That, wherever possible, arrangements be made with the assistance of the Department of Public Works, for the use, during evening and night shifts, of vacant spaces rightly allocated to other departments and that, if necessary, shift schedules be adjusted by fifteen minutes or so to arrive at better co-ordination.

208. That the Department allow the participation of the local joint committees in all matters mentioned in recommendations 201 to 207 inclusive.

209. That present departmental regulations on smoking be maintained except for letter carriers after they have left the post office and wicket clerks when not directly serving the public.

210. That Headquarters authorize postmasters to designate a larger number of smoking areas for inside employees handling or sorting mail.

## CHAPTER 25

### PREFERRED ASSIGNMENT FOR CAUSE

211. That the Department continue to assign employees, handicapped but physically capable of working, to lighter assignments.

212. That the staff organizations, as well as the employees, assist the Department by agreeing that a certain number of positions called "preferred" or others with lighter duties be made available to handicapped employees regardless of seniority.

213. That district directors and postmasters of the larger staff post offices, with the assistance and co-operation of the local joint committees, carry out a study to determine, in accordance with local conditions, if one or more new preferred positions with lighter duties can be created.

## CHAPTER 26

### SOME MAJOR FRINGE BENEFITS

214. That the staff organizations undertake a thorough study of the entire field of social security fringe benefits enjoyed now by postal employees to determine precisely the nature of and reason for the amendments they are clamouring for, including the possible adoption of a longevity pay plan.

215. That for this purpose, the appropriate authorities make available to the staff organizations all information they require to carry out this study.

216. That the staff organizations keep their own members informed on this study.

217. That the appropriate authorities, either during the forthcoming collective bargaining negotiations or in the general atmosphere of collective bargaining, agree to discuss these fringe benefits and all their terms and conditions.

## CHAPTER 27

### WICKET CLERKS

218. That the Department ensure that all regulations affecting wicket clerks are adhered to, not only by postmasters and supervisors, but by the staff of its audit inspection teams.

219. That the Department increase from \$5.00 to \$10.00 the maximum amount which may be credited to a clerk's account out of his surpluses or excess cash.

220. That the Department continue to allow a clerk's shortages to be offset from his own account in the surplus cash fund, but that the maximum be raised from \$5.00 to \$10.00.

221. That the credit balance permissible in any clerk's individual account be raised from \$25.00 to \$50.00.

222. That a clerk be allowed two or three days to obtain funds needed to cover large deficits of a non-fraudulent nature.

223. That clerks be free to accept or refuse when asked to take deposits to the bank.

224. That wicket service be discontinued or reduced to a minimum in post offices where revenue between the hours of 5:30 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. is insufficient to meet the cost of staffing.

225. That other problems of lesser importance be solved locally after discussions at the local joint committee level.

#### CHAPTER 28

##### GUARANTEE FUND

226. That the Postmaster General decide if it is advisable to exercise the discretionary powers granted him by section 5(1) (L) of the Post Office Act and to re-establish, or not, the guarantee fund along the legal authority given in this section.

227. That, on the basis of his decision, the Postmaster General discuss with the national leaders of the staff organizations all aspects and implications of establishing and maintaining a guarantee fund for the protection of postal employees against losses arising from default or neglect in the carrying out of their duties.

#### CHAPTER 29

##### WALKS AND CHECKS

228. That the Department undertake, with all possible dispatch, a complete review of each walk by trained experts.

229. That in each case this review be made with the participation and co-operation of the letter carrier concerned.

230. That once this review is completed, the twice-yearly "self-checks" be abolished and that "supervised" checks by trained experts take place only when necessary.

231. That the Department and the Letter Carriers' Union, at the national joint committee level, attempt to reach an agreement on the basic criteria required to establish walks and that these criteria be followed as much as possible in evaluating each walk at the local level.

232. That letter carriers not be compelled to return to the post office at the end of each day, except in cases already provided for in present directives and in cases mentioned in Chapter 33 on "Overtime for Letter Carriers".

233. That the authority now given by the Department to letter carriers to start work 20 minutes before the official starting time not be rescinded, but that the carriers themselves, in each post office, if they deem it advisable, decide by majority vote their stand in this matter.

#### CHAPTER 30

##### MAIL SORTING

234. That the alphabetical mail sorting system be retained for the time being.

235. That serious efforts be made by both parties to settle differences of opinion concerning this system.

236. That "line of delivery" sorting cases, for magazines and periodicals, be installed whenever carriers so request.

237. That no effort be spared to improve the alphabetical sorting system (if it is to be retained) in order to make it more acceptable to the letter carriers, e.g., wing-type cases, better layout of walks, elimination of identical street names, etc.

#### CHAPTER 31

##### DELIVERY OF MAIL

238. That the Department set 35 pounds as the maximum weight of mail any letter carrier should be required to carry.

239. That postmasters ensure that each letter carrier has a sufficient number of relay boxes on his walk, and, if not, that immediate steps be taken to remedy the situation.

240. That the postmasters ensure that the contractors responsible for the transportation of mail to the relay boxes carry out their obligations to the letter, especially with regard to the number of trucks required and the hours of departure from the post offices in the morning.

241. That the Department take the necessary measures to have the snow removed around the relay boxes.

242. That Headquarters make sure that postmasters comply with existing instructions dealing with the order of priority for classes of mail, especially regarding the leeway allowed to classes other than first class mail.

243. That postmasters interpret more generously the directives on delivery by parcel post of mail matter exceeding two pounds or where the volume exceeds 150 cubic inches and that it be so for all possible combinations of these items.

244. That the Department review its policy concerning the delivery of bulky trade samples.

245. That the Department remind postmasters to be more flexible in the degree of priority afforded second and third class mail.

246. That a maximum time limit of more than 90 days if necessary but not more than 180 days be rigorously enforced, in future, for changes of address.

247. That the Department institute a campaign to educate the public on the regulations pertaining to the addressing of mail.

248. That the Department put to the test suspension of delivery notification cards in cases of non-delivery of mail.

249. That postmasters and supervisors take into account requests by the letter carriers, when they recommend suspension of mail delivery to a patron who continually ignores departmental regulations.

250. That the Department no longer request letter carriers to make enquiries of the patrons, when such enquiries are not related to the postal service proper.

251. That all federal departments give very clear instructions to their personnel on the classification and use of various classes of mail.

CHAPTER 32

MAILMOBILES

252. That the Department immediately undertake a detailed inspection of mailmobiles, especially those that have been in operation for a year or more.

253. That these inspections take place in the presence and with the assistance of at least one representative of the Letter Carriers' Union.

254. That in every case where it is deemed necessary, the Department allocate to the district directors or postmasters any additional funds required to have essential repairs made and equipment installed when absolutely required.

255. That the Bureau of Classification Revision examine carefully the classification of mailmobile drivers.

CHAPTER 33

OVERTIME FOR LETTER CARRIERS

256. That letter carriers be entitled to overtime whenever the volume of mail to be delivered is heavier than usual or if weather conditions are abnormal, unfavourable, or difficult and they have to work overtime.

257. That relief supervisory letter carriers, besides being granted overtime under the same conditions as letter carriers, be entitled to overtime when they work additional hours because they are not as familiar with the walks as the regular letter carriers.

258. That the Department immediately implement its new policy of approving recognized overtime for a walk in favour of a new letter carrier until the walk has been revised.

259. That a letter carrier on a "jeep route" be entitled to claim overtime whenever he is compelled to work overtime because of a mechanical breakdown or other mishap.

CHAPTER 34

DOGS

260. That postmasters and immediate supervisors rigorously comply with the instructions issued by Headquarters in 1956, to ensure that carriers receive all necessary protection against the ever-present possibility of being bitten while carrying out their duties.

261. That supervisors do not hesitate to discontinue the delivery of mail, immediately it becomes evident that a patron refuses or neglects to provide adequate protection to the carrier from the possible attacks of a vicious, dangerous, or menacing dog.

262. That postmasters maintain closer liaison with municipal authorities and require that all relevant by-laws be strictly enforced.

263. That Headquarters report, as soon as possible, on the results of its investigation into the advisability of making available to those letter carriers, who so wish, a repellent which would offer better protection against dogs and that, should the report prove favourable, a policy be adopted to that effect after agreement by the Letter Carriers' Union.

CHAPTER 35

SEASONAL CHANGES OF UNIFORM

264. That the Department issue a directive to the effect that each individual letter carrier make his own decision regarding the date for seasonal changes of uniforms, except regarding the wearing of the hats.

CHAPTER 36

JOB SECURITY

265. That the Department adhere to its policy regarding surplus railway mail clerks and thus provide them with maximum reasonable security in any new position they might assume.

CHAPTER 37

HOURS OF WORK AND OVERTIME

266. That the Department henceforth pay night differential to railway mail clerks for all hours of work during which they have remained on duty in the railway mail car.

267. That the Department pay railway mail clerks compensation at time-and-a-half for all work performed on a statutory holiday.

CHAPTER 38

MILEAGE ALLOWANCE AND LAYOVER TIME

268. That the Department and the Federation of Railway Mail Clerks meet, as soon as possible, to come to a mutual agreement on the most appropriate method of combining mileage and layover allowances.

CHAPTER 39

DEAD-HEADING

269. That the Department make sure railway mail clerks are provided at all times with the necessary means of transportation when they must travel from their place of residence to the starting point of the assigned run and back.

270. That expenses incurred by railway mail clerks in such cases be reimbursed.

271. That the Department, in consultation with the Federation of Railway Mail Clerks, revise its regulations concerning time compensation for clerks travelling under such circumstances.

CHAPTER 40

PUBLIC RELATIONS

272. That the Department and appropriate agencies hasten the decisions required to implement the new public relations and information program of the Post Office Department.

CHAPTER 41

METHODS AND STANDARDS

273. That, henceforth, before making any significant changes in methods and standards, the Department first discuss them with the staff organizations.

274. That all postal employees obtain detailed explanation of the objectives of the present Methods and Standards program and of the results achieved to date.

275. That the personnel of the Methods and Standards Division receive adequate training in the art of "human relations".

276. That the Methods and Standards Division pay more attention to the improvement of equipment and working conditions and to any other factor which may affect the workers in the carrying out of their daily tasks.

CHAPTER 42

PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

277. That the senior officer responsible for personnel administration in the Department be given the rank of Assistant Deputy Minister and report directly to the Deputy Postmaster General.

278. That Personnel Administration be reorganized and that a sufficient number of qualified persons be employed as soon as possible.

279. That this personnel service be provided with all necessary research facilities.

280. That the plan of organization proposed for personnel administration in the Post Office Department be implemented as soon as possible.

281. That grade 16, 15 and 14 post offices be provided with a personnel officer.

282. That the appropriate authorities allocate the funds required by the Department for this purpose.



A L P H A B E T I C A L   I N D E X



ALPHABETICAL INDEX

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Part</u>	<u>Chap.</u>	<u>Sec.</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Part</u>	<u>Chap.</u>	<u>Sec.</u>
<b>A</b>						<b>C (cont'd)</b>	
Accidents	III	24	2	Christmas help	III	8	5
Accumulated sick leave credits	III	26	2	Circulars and samples	V	31	5
Acknowledgements	pages	iii, vi & vii		Civil Service Commission - Appeals			
Acting pay	III	11	2	to	III	18	
Address changes	V	31	7	Classification of mail	V	31	9
Address labels	V	31	8	Classification of positions	III	9	
Administration of personnel	VII	42		Closing remarks			
Air conditioning	III	24	7	Clothing	III	11	5
Allowance - Mileage	VI	38	1	Coffee breaks	III	10	5
Allowances and pay	III	11		Collective bargaining	III	5	
Apartment buildings	V	31	8	Common problems of a general nature	III		
Appeals to the Civil Service Commission	III	18		Competitions and promotions	III	15	
Assignments - preferred for cause	III	25		Construction of Post Offices	III	24	7
Assistant Deputy Postmaster General - Personnel Administration - position guide	Appendix H			Consultants	II	4	
Authority delegation	III	7		Consultation	III	10	1
Authority - Division, regarding environmental and physical working conditions	III	24	1	Controls and establishments	III	6	
					III	8	1
<b>B</b>						<b>D</b>	
Bargaining - Collective	III	5		Dates and places of hearings	Appendix A		
Boot allowance	III	11	4	Dead heading	VI	39	
Boxes - Relay	V	31	2	Death Benefit and Superannuation Plans	III	26	1
Breaks - Coffee	III	10	5	Delegation of authority	III	7	
<b>C</b>						<b>D</b>	
Carriers - Letter	I	2	2	Deliveries - two per day	V	31	6
Casual employees	III	8	4	Delivery of mail	V	31	
Changes of address	V	31	7	Department of Labour	III	24	2
Chauffeur - Postal	I	2	1	Department of National Health and Welfare	III	24	4
Cheques - Pay	III	11	1	Department of Public Works	III	24	1
Checks and walks	V	29					
Chief, Personnel Administration (Major Post Offices) - position guide	Appendix M						

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Part</u>	<u>Chap.</u>	<u>Sec.</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Part</u>	<u>Chap.</u>	<u>Sec.</u>
D (cont'd.)					F		
Despatchers - Mail Development and training	I III	2 22	1	Field operating services First aid	I III	1 24	4
Differential - Night work	III	11	3	Fringe benefits - some major ones	III	26	
Directives and instructions	III	23		Fund - Guarantee	IV	28	
Director of Personnel Classification - position guide	Appendix J			G			
Director of Program Co-ordination and Employee Services - position guide	Appendix K			Galleries - Observation	III	20	
Director of Staffing - position guide	Appendix I			General impressions	II	4	
Director of Staff Relations - position guide	Appendix L			Geographical distribution of employees	Appendix Q		
Discipline	III	16		Grievance procedure	III	17	
District Personnel Administrator - position guide	Appendix N			Guarantee fund	IV	28	
Division of authority and responsibilities re environmental and physical working conditions	III	24	1	H			
Dogs	V	34		Handlers - Mail Department	I	2	1
Dust	III	24	6	Health and Welfare	III	24	4
E				Help - Christmas	III	8	5
Employees - geographical distribution of Enquiries by Letter	Appendix Q			Hours of work and shift schedules	III	10	1
Carriers	V	31	9	Hours of work - Railway Mail Clerks	VI	37	1
Environmental and physical working conditions - General	III	24	1	I			
Environmental and physical working conditions - Standards	III	24	1	Implementation of standards regarding environmental and physical working conditions	III	24	1
Equipment and supplies	III	24	5	Impressions - General	II	4	
Establishments and controls	III	8	1	Instructions and directives	III	23	
Examinations - Proficiency	III	14		Insurance plans - Surgical-Medical	III	26	4
				Interpretation of regulations	V	31	8

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Part</u>	<u>Chap.</u>	<u>Sec.</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Part</u>	<u>Chap.</u>	<u>Sec.</u>
I (cont'd.)				N			
Introduction Investigations	page i III		19	Night differential III Non-supervisory operating employees I		11	3
J				Notification card - Suspension of delivery V		2	
Job security - Railway Mail Clerks	VI	36		Number of relay boxes V		31	9
						31	2
L				C			
Labels for addressing	V	31	8	Observation gal- leries III		20	
Labour Department	III	24	2	Occupant mail V		31	8
Layover time	VI	38	2	Operating - Non- supervisory employees I		2	
Leave - General	III	13		Organizational and Functional Chart			
Leave - Sick	III	13	2	of National Head- quarters Post			
Leave - Special with pay	III	13	3	Office Department Appendix B			
Leave - Vacation	III	13	1	Organization Chart			
Leave without pay	III	13	4	District Offices Appendix C			
Letter Carriers	I	2	2	Organization Chart			
Lighting	III	24	7	Post Offices			
List of District Offices	Appendix C			Grade 16 Appendix E			
List of Post Offices Grades 14 to 19 inclusive	Appendix F	26	3	Organization Chart			
Longevity pay	III			Post Offices			
M				Grades 17, 18			
				and 19 Appendix D			
Mail classification	V	31	9	Organization of present Personnel			
Mail - Delivery of	V	31		Branch Appendix O			
Mail Despatchers	I	2	1	Organization of proposed Person- nel Branch Appendix P			
Mail Handlers	I	2	1	Organizations - Staff I 3			
Mailmobiles	V	32		Overtime - General III 10 3			
Mail sorting	V	30		Overtime - Letter Carriers V 33			
Mail to occupant	V	31	8	Overtime - Railway Mail Clerks VI 37 2			
Major fringe benefits	III	26		P			
Manning problems - Special	III	8	6	Parcel post V 31 4			
Manpower	III	8					
Maximum weight to carry	V	31	1				
Meal hours	III	10	4				
Medical facilities	III	24	4				
Methods and standards	VII	41					
Mileage allowance	VI	38	1				

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Part</u>	<u>Chap.</u>	<u>Sec.</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Part</u>	<u>Chap.</u>	<u>Sec.</u>
P (cont'd.)						R (cont'd.)	
Parking facilities	III	24	9	Regulations - Interpretation of	V	31	8
Part-time employees	III	8	3	Relay boxes - General	V	31	2
Pay - Acting	III	11	2	Relay boxes - Number of	V	31	2
Pay and allowances	III	11		Relay boxes - Snow clearing in area of	V	31	2
Pay cheques	III	11	1	Relay boxes - Transportation of mail to	V	31	2
Pay - Longevity	III	26	3				
Personnel Administra-							
tion	VII	42					
Physical and environ-							
mental working condi-							
tions - General	III	24	1				
Places and dates of							
hearings	Appendix A						
Political activities	III	21					
Position classification	III	9			S		
Postage rates	V	31	3				
Postal Chauffeur	I	2	1	Safety programs	III	24	3
Postal Clerks	I	2	1	Samples and circulars	V	31	5
Post Offices - Construc-				Seasonal changes of uniform	V	35	
tion of	III	24	7	Second and Third Class Mail	V	31	5
Post Office Department				Seniority	III	12	
and its employees	I	1		Shift schedules and hours of work	III	10	1
Preferred assignments				Sick leave - General	III	13	2
for cause	III	25		Sick leave - Accumulated credits	III	26	2
Problems of a general				Smoking	III	24	10
nature	III			Snow clearing around relay boxes	V	31	2
Problems of particular				Sorting of mail	V	30	
interest to Letter				Special leave with pay	III	13	3
Carriers	V			Special Manning problems	III	8	6
Problems of particular				Special problems	VII		
interest to Postal				Staff Organizations	I	3	
Clerks	IV			Staffing and turn-over	III	8	2
Problems of particular				Standards and methods	VII	41	
interest to Railway							
Mail Clerks	VI						
Proficiency examina-							
tions	III	14					
Programs - Safety	III	24	3				
Promotions and competi-							
tions	III	15					
Public Relations	VII	40					
Public Works Depart-							
ment	III	24	1				
R							
Railway Mail Clerks	I	2	4				
Rates of postage	V	31	3				

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Part</u>	<u>Chap.</u>	<u>Sec.</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Part</u>	<u>Chap.</u>	<u>Sec.</u>
S (cont'd.)					U		
Standards of environmental and physical working conditions	III	24	1	Uniform - Seasonal changes	V	35	
Standards - Implementation of, regarding environmental and physical working conditions	III	24	1	Vacation leave	III	13	1
Superannuation and Death Benefit Plans	III	26	1				
Supervisory Letter					W		
Carriers	I	2	3	Walks and checks	V	29	
Supplies and equipment	III	24	5	Wash-up time	III	10	6
Surgical-Medical Insurance Plans	III	26	4	Week-end work	III	10	2
Suspension of delivery notification card	V	31	9	Weight - Maximum to carry	V	31	1
				Wicket Clerks	IV	27	
T				Work week - General	III	10	

Table of wages and salary rates for non-supervisory operating staffs                  Appendix G

Third and Second Class			
Mail	V	31	5
Training and Development	III	22	
Transportation for employees	III	24	8
Transportation of mail to relay boxes	V	31	2
Turnover and staffing	III	8	2
Two deliveries a day	V	31	6





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Report. Commissioner:  
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